

John Osborne on Carter's Troubles

Garry Wills on Kennedy Crudity

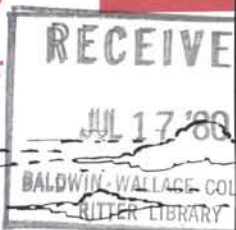
R. W. B. Lewis on V. S. Pritchett

v. 183 no. 3

THE NEW REPUBLIC

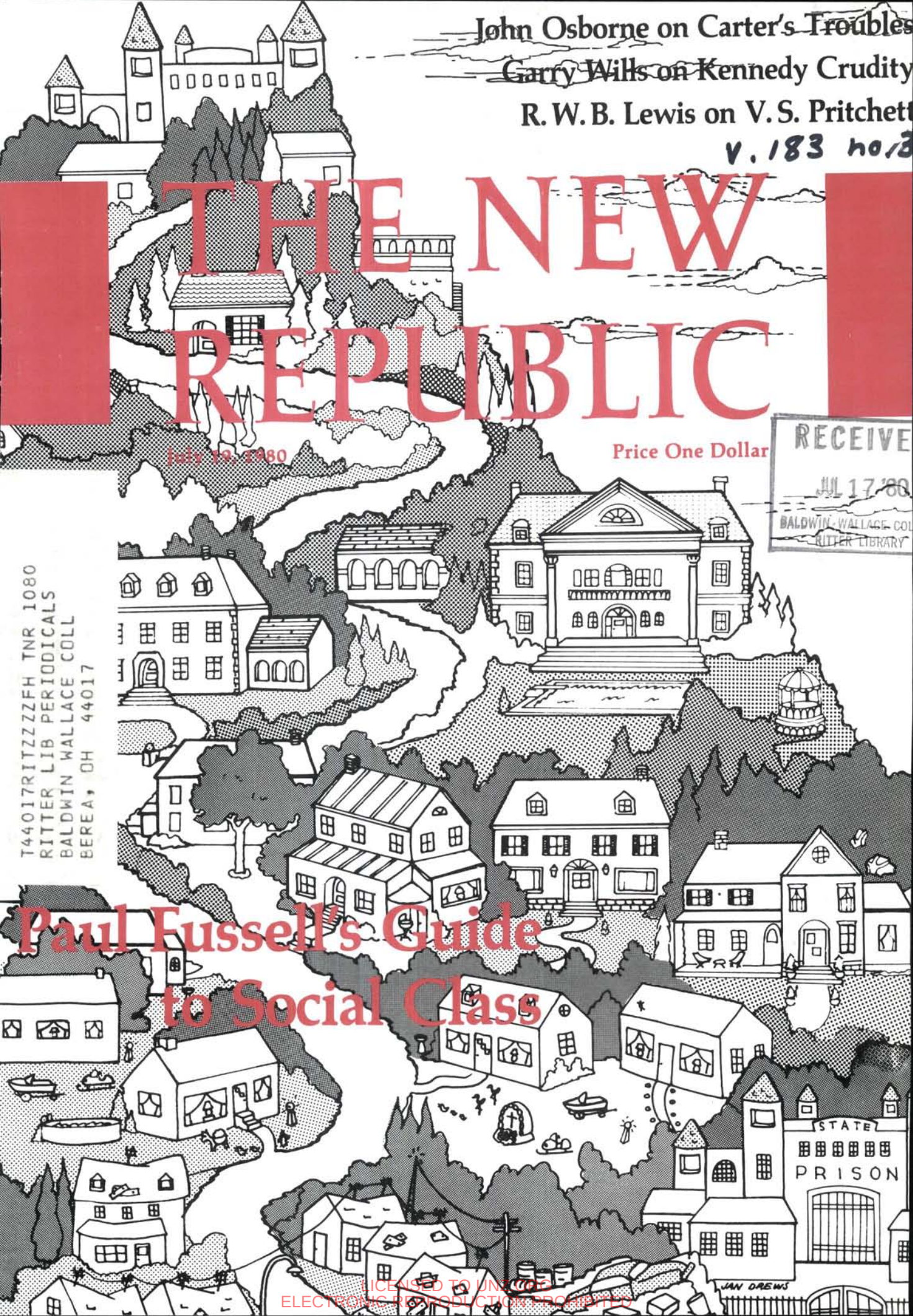
July 19, 1980

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TRB

from Detroit
July 19, 1980



Unreal City

The chairman commands, "The clerk will call the roll!" and the clerk bawls, "A-la-bam-ah! . . ." It is the most electrifying moment at a presidential convention. Now we are here to see the ancient spectacle repeated, but some of the sparkle is gone. Why? Come with me to Detroit and I will show you why.

As it happens, Detroit is itself a sick city; it is located in a troubled nation in a dangerous world. Detroit has 230,000 on Aid for Dependent Children and over 18 percent unemployed. The auto moguls have just committed the greatest blunder in industrial history by overstaying the big-car market and refusing, with purblind obstinacy, to see the world oil shortage. Ironically, it is the loathed big government in Washington that has bailed out that exponent of free enterprise, Chrysler, from bankruptcy. Any politician who is nominated for president here, if elected, must deal with recession, Detroit, and national unemployment that is likely to rise to nine percent. Abroad the sinister rivalry with Russia takes a turn for the worse. To show our will Congress has just ordered four million youths aged 19 and 20 (but not their sisters) to report to the post office to register for the draft this month when they receive the summoning postcard. Will they go? Will they riot? And, in this election year, will they take an interest in public affairs? Their interest in the past has

been languid. Four years ago only 36.3 percent of the males and 38 percent of the females in this age group voted, and eight million stayed home. That might have decided the election and could again this year if the contest is close.

The point about the convention is its unreality. Where is the excitement? It used to be a standardized five-act drama: Pointing with Pride; Viewing With Alarm; Family Squabble (platform, competition for delegates); the Man of the Day; and the Kiss-and-Make-Up Finale. All in living color on television. There were war dances too; great shows. Don't think these parades were meaningless: the band played, the organ pealed, the particular delegates affected went round the inside track with banners and placards; everybody grinned sheepishly or gave way wholeheartedly to the endearing sentimentality of these American folk rites; they gave a psychological push to the party and encouraged the braves against the warriors of the rival tribe.

But where is the excitement now? We know the candidate is Ronald Reagan. He has been nominated already. This man who may wield enormous power came up not as leader of a legislature, screened by his peers, but by a system that favors an unencumbered outsider with lots of time and money to campaign; he is a creation of the press, polls, and primaries. It is the trail that Jimmy Carter blazed. It is fitting that an increasingly theatrical procedure finally has resulted in the selection of an attractive movie actor. Carter was a fresh figure preaching love, trust, integrity, open government, and hostility to government. We hardly knew more about him at the end of his campaign than at the beginning. Perhaps we shall know more about the still mysterious Reagan, particularly if they manage to bring off a face-to-face debate between the candidates. That could be decisive.

You look around at the gigantic setting of the Detroit convention and are staggered by it; what has this got to do with the reality of world politics, with Reagan's functions if he is elected, as I suspect he will be? Take the Supreme Court: five justices are over 70, another three are over 60. In the nature of things several appointments should come in the next four years. The court is extraordinarily divided. An explosion of cases and dissents came in its final week. The court more and more is usurping the legislative function as Congress and the president dodge the hard social decisions. Leonard Levy concluded the

following in a 1974 survey: "In a figurative sense, Richard M. Nixon now and for an indefinite period in the future casts four votes in criminal justice cases decided by the Supreme Court." Which president, Reagan or Carter, will cast the court's decisive votes in the years ahead? That's one of the things this odd election process is about. Of course the decisions on world affairs are awe-inspiring. Reagan by all appearances—by his selection of advisers and by the platform prepared here—is preparing to take a hard line; he will "run against Russia" and call Carter soft on communism.

The Detroit convention exemplifies the new system under which the voters get a choice between personalities, not parties. Parties have all but collapsed. Thirty years ago, in September 1950, a 15-member blue ribbon panel of the American Political Science Association issued a 30,000-word report warning that this could happen. Already, it charged, the two big political parties "are now probably the most archaic institutions in the United States." The panel couldn't foresee 37 primaries and polls and television taking the selection of the candidate out of the hands of the conventions: it wanted a responsible party running the government and an opposition party acting as critic, "developing, defining and presenting the policy alternatives." There was a danger, the panel said, in overextending the presidency; long before Richard Nixon it warned that "there is no other republic that entrusts to its President as much constitutional responsibility." It proposed, among other things, an overall 50-member party council and biennial party conventions. One proposal has been adopted. Treasury assistance is given in the election process; but whereas the committee would have had the money go to the party, the present law gives it to the candidate, making him freer from the party than ever.

What are the dangers of doing nothing? asked the political scientists in 1950. There is danger of "an explosive era"; of "overextending the presidency"; of promoting somebody who will "flirt with unconstitutional means and ends." If the president is all-powerful there is danger that "either his party becomes a flock of sheep, or the party falls apart." I had a letter from Clarence A. Berdahl of Urbana, Illinois, the other day, one of the authors of the all-but-forgotten report. The dangers are as great as ever, he says.

Correspondence

Israel and the PLO

To the editors:

In Leon Wieseltier's article, "The Sabbath Ambush" (TNR, May 24), he attempts to present a balanced view, equally condemning the Palestinian terrorists on one hand, and religious Jewish fanatics and advocates of Israeli settlements in the West Bank on the other hand. He supports full abandonment of the West Bank to the Arabs, leaving it completely free of Jews (*Judenrein*), an independent Palestinian state governed by the Palestine Liberation Organization (no other leadership appears to be willing to head such a state), and a peace treaty approved by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, a reluctant Jordan and Israel, and of course the US and Western Europe. Does Wieseltier really believe that such a treaty will bring about lasting peace in the Middle East?

The political leaders of the Palestinian Arabs have always considered the Jews originating in Europe and America as aliens who have no right to settle anywhere in the Middle East. The Palestinian Arabs see no connection between Hitler's attempt to exterminate all of Europe's Jewry and the tremendous growth of Zionism since then. So their leaders never will be satisfied with half a loaf, namely Gaza and the West Bank, for the permanent boundaries of their state. They never will give up their ultimate goal of pushing the Jews into the sea. In this, they can count on the moral support of the governments of Syria, Libya, and Iraq.

There never will be a lasting peace in the Middle East until the map of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Israel is redrawn to allow true self-determination for all the peoples of these states. Most of the present boundaries were established by the British and French colonial powers after World War I. New boundaries should be established by these countries themselves with a minimum of outside interference. Neither the oil of the Persian Gulf nor the politics of the cold war should be allowed to impinge.

Lawrence Rubin
San Leandro, California

To the editors:

Leon Wieseltier asks, "Who are the Palestinian leaders who will suspend their own rights, and talk borders and

security and peace?"

I suggest Mohammed Milhem. His record?

"Two states with full authority, full independence. Once the parties recognize each other's rights, that is the beginning. If any Palestinians—and I say this openly—say that there is no place for the Israelis, I'll tell them to go to hell." (Ian Black interview with Milhem, *Jerusalem Post*, July 29, 1979.)

"Mayor Milhem, recently addressing a group of young Israeli Labor Party members in West Jerusalem, sparked loud applause when he spoke of his acceptance of an Israeli state along the pre-1967 war borders." (Trudy Rubin, *Christian Science Monitor*, May 6, 1980.)

"You give us self-determination and there will be peace and security for all nations in the area, including Israel." (Richard C. Hottel interview of Milhem, CBS News, May 16, 1980.)

Milhem is an acknowledged Palestinian leader.

"Mr. Milhem . . . was frequently mentioned by Western diplomats, by foreign and Israeli journalists, and even by some of the Israeli military government officials who labeled him a radical, as the West Bank political figure with the most potential for national leadership. (Trudy Rubin, *Christian Science Monitor*, May 9, 1980.)

Wieseltier, in his piece, added, "There are other ways [than terror] to determine their own future, but the Palestinians have not yet mastered them, or even tried."

I respectfully submit that Milhem tried. The result? On March 14 he was denied permission by the authorities to leave the West Bank to express his views in the US, and then on May 3 he was deported, without trial or hearing, for "inflammatory statements."

Merle Thorpe Jr.
Washington, DC

Leon Wieseltier replies:

Mr. Rubin errs: my essay was not balanced, because an attack upon the settlements is not an attack upon Israel. It is, quite the contrary, a defense. But an attack upon terrorism is indeed an attack upon the PLO. I share Mr. Rubin's misgivings about the PLO—surely that was plain—because there are no factions or parties or movements within the PLO pleading for an end to the slaughter, and for an earnest play for what the Palestinians can get in

Palestine, which will be no more than what the Jews got. Mohammed Milhem speaks sweetly to CBS and the *Christian Science Monitor*, but in Washington recently he spoke for the PLO. He averred that "all that is ugly in our world comes from the Zionists" and that "the killing of these Jews [in Hebron] . . . is justified by human rights." I doubt that Mr. Milhem has told Arafat and Habash and Jiriyil to go to hell; he would have met with much worse than expulsion and celebrity.

Mr. Thorpe does not grasp that the "two-state solution" has nothing to recommend it as long as terror is not renounced—as long as it is unclear to the Israelis that the proposed state will not be used for traditional Palestinian ends. The justice of the Palestinian cause is widely acknowledged in the Jewish world, and it is, frankly, beside the point. *Fiat justitia, pereat Israel.*

Mr. Rubin should be less loose with the word *Judenrein*. The Arabs are not Nazis, and the Jews have a state. There is no law of history according to which Jews must forever live where they have lived. Jews must act in their own best interest, period. Is the South Bronx also *Judenrein*?

Mr. Rubin's fears, which are not only his, make it impossible for him to understand the political language in which my essay was written, and that is a part of the problem. Nowhere did I advocate "full abandonment of the West Bank to the Arabs." I advocated—like the Labor party in Israel, Peace Now, and other Jews unintoxicated by God—a principle of territorial compromise, which is something very different.

Cure for common coal?

To the editors:

Stephen Chapman gives a fair account of many of the environmental problems of coal, but he fails to mention waste disposal ("The Rebirth of King Coal," TNR, June 21). A 1000 megawatt coal-

(continued on page 36)

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The editors welcome correspondence from TNR's readers. Letters intended for publication should include the correspondent's full name, address, and telephone number, should be typed double-spaced, and held to under 200 words. Longer letters may be abridged due to lack of space.



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July 19, 1980



Desperate Choices

As the witty and wicked Clare Boothe Luce once said of Tom Dewey, a soufflé will not rise twice. If these were ordinary times, the axiom surely would apply to the lightweight now aspiring, from a very low point in the polls, to another four years in the White House. There is nothing extraordinary, of course, in the Republicans

behaving like the Bourbons on the eve of the Restoration. Nonetheless, it is still astonishing to find the activist majority of the GOP so far to the right that even its chosen standard-bearer, Ronald Reagan, is not trusted enough to be let loose for a campaign in the country without ironclad ideological instructions



against everything that threatens the republic—from abortions and the legal equality of women to what the xenophobes are still calling, if you can believe it, un-American activities.

President Carter may not be happy with his opponent. But he could not be happier with Governor Reagan's congregation and the credo it has written for him. Here is irresistible material for a scare campaign to corral wavering Democrats, disinherited Republicans, and sensible independent voters behind a second term for someone who, after all, is nothing worse than a certified incompetent, and whose party hardly seems to exist at all. Better no party, maybe, Carter's lieutenants are calculating, than this collection of true believers assembled in Detroit trying to impose the 19th century on the 21st. The Republican party, like the Democratic party, may have been in a decline stretching back nearly a generation. But it does have beliefs, something the Democrats do not seem to have, at least if we look to the Democratic platform for evidence of historical commitments and traditional values. There is little so disheartening in this sad summer theater of politics than the spectacle of the delegates to the Democratic platform committee battling and pronouncing on policy, not according to the dictates of conviction or, for that matter, even of constituency, but reflexively according to the political calculations of either Kennedy or Carter. In this regard, the Republican party is a more democratic party than the Democratic party. The GOP will go to the electorate with a document whose rhetoric and details are distinctly Republican, and which goes far to explain why there are scarcely any Republicans left in the US, only voters who vote Republican on those occasions when the Democrats leave them no other alternative consistent with public hygiene. The American voter seems to think that electing Republicans is not to choose them to lead but to punish the Democrats. For the voters to confirm the decisions of this Republican convention will be cruel and unusual punishment to the country as well.

Robert Strauss must now figure that the country's look into the ugly collective heart of Reagan's legions will dispose at least the big states to look kindly on the presidential status quo. Indeed, if a glimpse of those legions, in the flush of their vengeful triumph over those heretical liberal Republicans whose heresy consists of timid demurrers to a foreign policy based on nuclear weapons and to a domestic policy based on dismantling the welfare state, won't so dispose them, then, heaven knows, nothing will.

So doubtless Carter's standing in the polls will rise somewhat, as the meaning of the ideological debauch in Detroit sinks in. How could it be otherwise? But there is still another question, the answer to which is not simply the habitual Republican death-wish, à la candidate Goldwater and the 1964 platform: why do the Republicans want to present themselves to the country so exposed in their stone-heartedness? The truth is that Jimmy Carter's inept tinkering—first one

way, then another, then back again—has made even the most extreme ideological nostrums plausible and more than vaguely alluring. The president's timid stewardship of the American position in the world, moreover, has created a popular nostalgia for that fictitious era when Uncle Sam got his way by checks craftily earmarked for obliging oligarchs. A people desperate about the decline of its country does not make intelligent choices. Now there is not even the possibility of an intelligent choice.

Some folks still hold out the hope that the Democratic party will bestir itself to choose someone else at Madison Square Garden. We're willing to cling to the hope also: it's not so long till August. But then there remains the candidacy of John Anderson—non-ideological, perhaps to a fault, but engaging the loyalties of people who know that what America requires now are small and concrete ways of getting us out of the mess Jimmy Carter has made and administered. Those modest steps may, in the present circumstances, require a big break from the stranglehold the two old parties have over our politics.

White House Watch

Carter Morale

The White House and Carter-Mondale campaign assistants and associates whose views are reflected here do not believe that the Carter presidency is dying. In trouble, yes. Doomed and dying, no. A frequent comment upon Carter's steady fall in the polls, the flood of reporting and punditry to the effect that he's done for, and the full awareness among his people that voters all over the country who were for him in 1976 are fed up with him now, is that Gerald Ford seemed to be in dire peril at this stage in 1976. Considering that year's outcome, it is not a happy parallel. But there is a remarkable similarity between the attitudes encountered near Carter this year and the attitudes and hopes around Ford in mid-1976 as they are described by one of his assistants, Robert Hartmann, in *Palace Politics*, a new book about the feuds behind the facade at the Ford White House. "There was one premise," Hartmann writes, "on which we all agreed [and] in which we were all proved utterly wrong. That was that, when the chips were down and Americans pulled the curtains of their voting booths, they would choose a known quantity over an unknown quantity. They didn't and are still getting to know the President they chose."

There is no worry about the nomination. The word from the battlefield to the generals at the campaign headquarters is that Senator Kennedy is losing delegates to Carter, not winning delegates away from Carter, with his prolonged struggle for the nomination.

The firm control by Carter delegates of the pre-convention platform and rules committees strengthened the certainties of the Carterites that their man and Vice President Mondale will be renominated. There is serious worry, however, about the possible aftermath of a divided convention. Some of this talk no doubt is intended to increase the party pressures on Kennedy to stop fighting and position himself to support Carter in the election campaign. But a note of genuine concern is unmistakable. Memory of what the strife at the 1968 convention did afterward to Hubert Humphrey's candidacy is alive and throbbing. Some of the worries about Kennedy's persistence are distinct from worry about his candidacy as such. The inquirer hears it said seriously and responsibly that Senator Henry Jackson of Washington state, who tried for the nomination in 1976, and Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd are among several Democratic dignitaries who are hedging their support of Carter and sniping at him in hope of picking up the pieces if Kennedy brings on a debacle at the convention. Senator Jackson is said to have discouraged a couple of rich contributors from covering themselves with gifts of \$1,000 to the Carter campaign. This sort of talk, notwithstanding its sources, indicates that disaffection with Carter and doubts of his prospects may reach higher and be more ominous than his people acknowledge. The official assumption is that the waverers and self-servers will fall in line once it's clear that Carter is in charge of the convention and is going to be renominated.

Less reliance is placed on improvement in Carter's appeal and performance than upon a conviction that voters, especially Democratic and liberal voters, will awaken before the election to the realities that Carter partisans find in the past philosophies and records of Ronald Reagan and John Anderson. It is unimaginable to Carter's true believers that in the heat of the election campaign Reagan will continue to get by with his new image as an acceptable and even attractive compromiser and bumbler, and that Anderson after 20 years of basic though lately modified conservatism can sustain his reincarnation as a liberal purist. There is a companion and rather forlorn hope that the media's bellwether reporters and commentators, on the air and in print, will exhaust what seems around Carter to be their obsession with his defects of performance and leadership, and pay more attention than has lately been the fashion to his, Reagan's, and Anderson's actual records. This is the hope and feeling, one must understand, of associates who really believe that Carter's record of legislative and executive accomplishment is much more solid and far better than is commonly reported and perceived. The plaint that Press Secretary Jody Powell first voiced in October 1977, and that media adviser Gerald Rafshoon expressed and tried to do something about in 1978 and 1979, is heard again. The plaint is that the fault is not in the substance but in the presentation of Carter programs and accomplishments. This in its nature is an

indictment primarily of Carter himself, a tacit admission that he has failed to project not only his programs but himself as effectively as he and they, his apologists hold, deserve to be presented and understood.

Narrower and more specific criticisms of Carter are heard from Carter loyalists. A few of them assert, nearly all of them agree, that as one of the seniors said the other day, "he shoots himself in the foot too often." Much staff time and energy go into discussions of what if anything to do about this, and the despairing conclusion generally is that not much can be done about it. Associates who urge the President to "be himself" can hardly call upon him to consult others before he goes winging off on his own, as he increasingly tends to do in his off-cuff remarks. Nobody in his service twice invites the cold contraction of his small blue eyes when he is urged to behave or amend his behavior in ways that he considers extraneous or insulting. Personal inclinations aside, there is just so much and no more that assistants and advisers can do to program a President who has a mind of his own. The programming and consultation, to the extent that they occur, can have a mixed effect. Carter's flat, initial refusal to debate John Anderson appalled his campaign committee chairman, Robert Strauss, who considered it to be a result of nonexistent or inadequate prior consultation. Strauss takes credit for persuading the President to correct his original stance and say he'd debate Anderson if he proved to be a substantial contender and if Carter still got a two-man debate with Ronald Reagan. The net effect, unintended by Strauss, was that Carter once again appeared to be zigzagging.

Strauss is among those who think that more government-wide as well as presidential discipline is required if Carter is to be reelected. The President's stop in Detroit, en route to Japan, to announce a previously prepared program of federal aid to the sick US automobile industry, is an example of the sort of politically motivated presidential and government action that all-out campaigners like Strauss advocate. The Justice Department's recent intervention as a friend of the court against the state of Mississippi's attempt to raise the tuition costs of Iranian students in its colleges and universities to prohibitive levels is the sort of politically blind federal action that the Strauss types deplore. It's said at the campaign headquarters that the impact on Mississippi voters was comparable to that of Henry Kissinger's support of Rhodesian blacks against their white government during the Texas

Coming Next Week:

The ACLU vs. Civil Liberties.

Republican primary in 1976. Gerald Ford's people blamed his loss of that primary on this impolitic move and thought it contributed to his loss of the election.

There is some hope that a recent change at the White House and at the campaign headquarters will improve the overall Carter performance. Whether or not it does, it's mildly interesting. Hamilton Jordan, the 36-year-old Georgian who has been Carter's White House staff chief in fact since 1977 and by belated designation since 1979, has moved to the committee as Strauss's deputy chairman and has been succeeded at the White House by another Georgian, Jack Watson, aged 42. Bob Strauss says that he persuaded a reluctant Carter to authorize the shift of Jordan to the committee. One gets the impression that Jordan would rather have it around that he initiated the change but is willing to live with the Strauss version. However that may be, the effect at the committee headquarters and at the White House generally is applauded. Having Jordan, Strauss, and campaign manager Tim Kraft in the same shop when they aren't traveling is said to clean up and speed up the campaign decision process. Jordan, who never has pretended to be a good administrator and who brought in a professional efficiency expert, staff director Alonzo McDonald, to do the managing for him last year, was so occupied with campaign problems and his general advisory role in recent months that he was hardly functioning as a staff chief. McDonald had been chairing most of the senior staff meetings, they had been reduced in frequency and scope, and Jordan often didn't show for them at all. Watson, a former Atlanta lawyer with a flair for management, chairs the meetings when he can and has revived a daily meeting of the true senior staff of some nine assistants after a larger group of assistants, special assistants, and deputies has met. Watson also is trying to give the assistants a sense of participation in discussions and policy formulation beyond their assigned areas and has begun occasionally to enlarge the very small group that meets with the President at 10 o'clock every morning when he is at the White House. With no intent to disparage Jordan, who resents any suggestion in the media or privately among his White House colleagues that he's been a poor chief of staff, the staff consensus is that Watson in contrast with Jordan is accessible when he's needed; that the processes of decision, consultation, and advice to the President have been materially improved; and that on the whole Watson's advent is "a big plus." The known intention of Carter and Jordan is that Jordan will return to the White House after the November election. This doesn't have to mean that he displaces Watson as chief of staff.

Jordan is not wholly out of the White House operation. He continues to advise Carter on such matters as the likely political impacts of this or that course. His first production at the campaign committee, a memo on post-convention election strategy, went to Carter when it went to Strauss. Jordan in early July had attended two senior staff meetings and one of the

restricted "10 o'clock meetings" with Carter. Everybody who worked for him at the White House was genuinely pleased and relieved when a special prosecutor found no believable evidence that Jordan had sniffed cocaine, as disgracefully alleged, at a New York City disco and a California party. Let a very senior White House assistant who admires Jordan have the last word here on his qualities as a staff chief:

"Hamilton does not have a dictatorial style. He's not a harsh operator. He has a great healing influence with people. They respect him. He operates with a light and very sensitive touch. In a place like this, a political area with great tension, that is an extraordinarily valuable thing, so I disagree with the comment [in a recent magazine profile of Jordan] that he is a lousy chief of staff. I think he's probably one of the best that you can have in here."

John Osborne

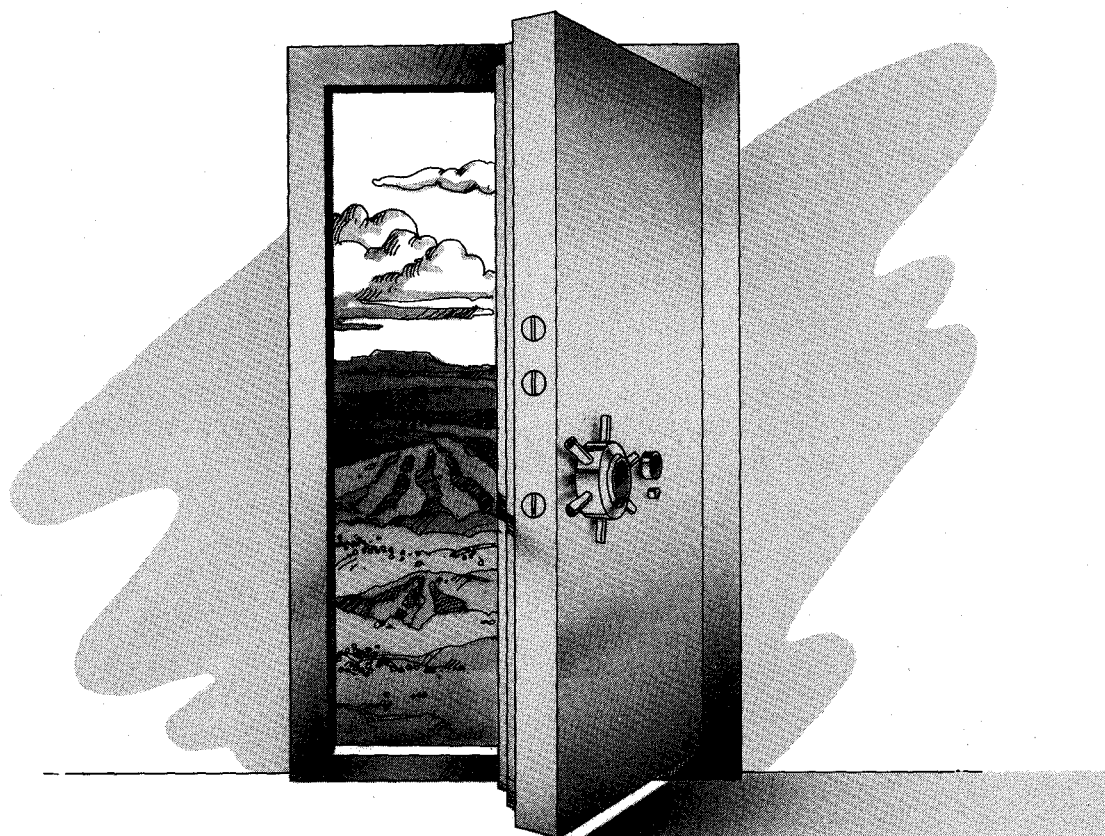
Politics

Democratic Wars

Things could hardly look worse for Jimmy Carter's chances of reelection. He is trailing Ronald Reagan in every major national poll: 51 to 44 percent according to ABC/Harris, 45 to 42 according to Gallup, 45 to 43 according to *Newsweek*, 40 to 36 according to Roper, and 47 to 37 according to CBS/*New York Times*. A new *Los Angeles Times* survey not only shows Reagan ahead nationally 40 to 30, with 25 for John Anderson, but indicates that Carter is in danger of finishing third in every region of the country except the south, where he's second to Reagan. Carter's approval ratings are back to their pre-hostage crisis lows. With the nation mired in a Carter recession, his economic approval ratings are in the teens, their lowest point ever. The national polls indicate that the public increasingly thinks of Ronald Reagan as a capable leader. Robert Teeter's new survey shows that voters think Republicans generally are more able than Democrats to handle every issue but unemployment, and there Democrats are favored by only three percentage points.

Bad as all this news is, it probably will get worse through July and August. Last week in Detroit, Republican platform decisions against the ERA and for a constitutional ban on abortions show how socially reactionary the dominant wing of the party is. But this week in Detroit, the Republicans will put on a television show that will be truly awesome in its detailed choreography. Reagan's visits around town are designed to make him appear the friend of the unemployed auto worker and the inner-city black. Most of the main speakers at the Detroit convention will be aging white

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To help cut its dependency on foreign oil, America must produce more oil and natural gas here at home. Our country has rich, untapped reserves; the problem is that much of them are under federal lands. About a third of our country is controlled by the federal government. Most of this land is currently off limits to energy exploration and development. And proposed legislation would shut these lands off permanently.

Energy lands should be developed.

Just one example: in the Rockies of Idaho, Montana, Utah and Wyoming, a mineral-rich

geologic area that's part of the "Overthrust Belt" contains 8 billion barrels of oil and 100 trillion cubic feet of natural gas by some estimates. But nearly half of this land may be put off limits.

Some government land management people feel that they have to draw a permanent line on land use: a line protecting every facet of the environment in its natural state from oil and natural gas development. At Amoco, we believe that energy can be produced on these lands while maintaining their natural integrity.

The environment can live with oil and gas development.

Now don't get us wrong. We are not for the wholesale exploitation of America's natural wilderness. But we would like to be able to explore public lands to find those having the potential for holding oil and natural gas deposits. Further, we'd like to be permitted to drill on those lands where large quantities of

oil and natural gas are most likely to be found.

Amoco believes that America can't afford to cut itself off from any opportunity to increase its energy reserves. Because producing secure American petroleum supplies is the best way to lessen the influence that foreign oil producers have on every American's standard of living.

America runs better on American oil.



males, but the cast of characters selected to introduce them will convey the impression that the GOP is the party of blacks, Hispanics, youth, and women, too.

Republican rhetoric is being rewritten to resonate with voters' heartstrings, not their pocket change. Listening to the speakers, voters are meant to think that the Republicans aren't worried so much about inflation and recession as they affect capital formation and corporate profits, but as they threaten the ability of people to own a home, hold a job, and educate their children. The Republicans will tell the country that they are unified both on major issues—supply-side economics at home, "strength" abroad—and on their candidate. If Ronald Reagan chooses anyone reasonably centrist as his running mate (my fearless prediction: Donald Rumsfeld, former congressman, Nixon aide, anti-poverty director, NATO ambassador, Ford aide, and secretary of defense), and if Reagan can keep his kooky adherents from booing Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger, then the Republican convention will end in a crescendo of good feeling. When the late-July polls come out, Reagan probably won't lead Carter by five or 10 points, but by 20 or 30.

Following that will come the Democratic cacophony of August. Edward Kennedy hasn't a prayer of taking the nomination away from President Carter, but he is determined to persist in trying. To succeed, Kennedy would have to convince about 400 Carter delegates to defect—and to do so secretly, since party rules permit candidates to replace any delegate they suspect of faithlessness.

There is not the slightest indication, however, that any of this is even beginning to happen. Associated Press political correspondents around the country have been contacting delegates in their states—often people they know intimately—and asking them about their intentions with a guarantee of confidentiality. The results from 2,200 interviews (two-thirds of the delegates) indicate that between three and four percent of Carter's delegates are leaning toward supporting Kennedy's attempt to change the rules, and eight percent aren't sure. If every last one of these people—12 percent of the Carter total—defects, then Kennedy might get an extra 240 votes on the rules question. He'd still be short of the 400 votes he needs. But then the AP soundings also show that four percent of Kennedy's delegates might switch to Carter's position on rules, and 11 percent aren't sure. The upshot, since Carter has more delegates, is that Carter may lose a few votes to Kennedy, but nowhere near enough. On the main question—if liberated, would you switch from Carter to Kennedy for president?—the AP could find only four delegates willing to say yes. If there is a revolt building, it is building very slowly.

Edward Kennedy is not the only person dreaming of revolts. Another is Arnold Picker, a former movie mogul who was Edmund Muskie's 1972 campaign finance director. Along with some former fundraisers

for Henry Jackson's 1976 campaign, Picker is trying to put together a third-force operation to spread disloyalty among Carter delegates. The theory behind Picker's committee is that an open convention never would turn to Kennedy, an even surer loser than Carter, but might choose someone else. The effort is buoyed by a Harris poll showing that Muskie runs even with Reagan in a two-man race, 48 to 48, while Carter trails, 51 to 44. However, there is little else supporting the third-force movement, especially the things it needs most: declarations of support from prominent Democratic officeholders and an announcement by a potential candidate that he is willing to challenge Carter for the nomination. Nor is the movement helped much by another Harris result, which shows that Carter is preferred by 38 percent of Democratic voters, while Muskie gets 30 percent and Kennedy 28.

Hopeless though the task may be, Kennedy is fighting on. The question is, why? Evans and Novak suggest that the answer is that he is trying to get a jump on the 1984 race. But if that is Kennedy's intent—his people all say, of course, that they'll win this year—then he probably is wasting his energy. Kennedy is not winning any new friends by dividing the Democratic party. Though many people admire the spirit it takes to endure one thrashing after another, at some point Kennedy has to begin looking like a fool. And 1980 has punctured the myth of Kennedy invincibility. Edward Kennedy has ceased to be the barrier preventing a whole generation of Democrats from seeking the presidency. If he runs in 1984, he will and should be just another contender alongside Gary Hart, Jay Rockefeller, Joe Biden, Dale Bumpers, Walter Mondale, Jerry Brown, and any number of other senators and governors who hear bands playing ruffles and flourishes in their dreams at night.

No, I think Edward Kennedy really believes what he told the Massachusetts State Democratic dinner in Boston on July 2—that he is representing "a cause." Kennedy said: "The failures of the last decade are not the fault of progressive policies, but the default of national leaders who have never really tried them." And "Let me declare again here tonight that I continue to be what I have been for all my public life. I am a liberal. And I am proud of it."

The platform Kennedy proposed for the Democratic party this year leaves no doubt that he is just that, but it makes one wonder whether he has any sense of limits. He is for more programs for everybody—and all right now. He's for more education, housing, and urban aid grants, a comprehensive health plan, a \$12 billion economic stimulus package, and higher minimum wages, yet he says he's against inflation. He wants "a free, open, and competitive economy" but he's for wage and price controls, energy price regulation, and health cost controls. He wants to "re-industrialize America" and improve productivity, but he also favors tax reforms that sock it to rich people and corporations. "In all of our economic programs," he says, "the one



overriding principle must be equity." Kennedy says he favors a "strong" defense, but his platform cautions against "simply spending more money."

Kennedy's platform is a throwback to Great Society exuberance in an era when resources are increasingly limited. It also implies increasing bureaucratic management of the economy even while Kennedy favors deregulation of specific industries. And it betrays an ignorance of what actually has been accomplished in the United States in the past 20 years: a total reversal of federal priorities from defense spending to domestic concerns. In 1958 the US budget allocated \$43.7 billion to defense and \$38.9 billion to non-defense programs. In 1980, non-defense outlays were more than three times the Pentagon budget. American voters seem to realize—even if Kennedy doesn't—that the time has come to emphasize productivity in economics, in order to increase our overall wealth, and to repair our defense establishment rather than cut it further to meet civilian needs.

In the Democratic platform committee, Kennedy forces adopted a hard-line, no-compromise position in order to set the stage for platform fights at the convention over wage-price controls, anti-recession measures, oil price regulations, and about 20 other issues that could require more than 40 hours to debate. Carter forces answered in the rules committee by showing the Kennedy people who's boss. Seating was arranged to give Carter delegates choice spots near microphones, while Kennedy's key floor leaders were

seated as inconveniently as possible. When a Kennedy delegate proposed distributing ceremonial committee co-chairmanships equally between camps, the Carterites turned the idea down flat. When rules chairman Daniel Inouye offered to let Kennedy floor leader James O'Hara amend his key motion in order to improve it for submission to the convention in August, Carter delegates vetoed the conciliatory gesture.

On the major issue, of course, the Carter people won decisively. Under Rule 11-H of the Democratic delegate selection rules and under Rule F-3-C of the convention rules, delegates are bound to vote for the candidate they were elected to support. In debating the issue, Kennedy and Carter forces generally showed less rancor than at the platform committee, though one of Kennedy's representatives accused Carter forces of wanting to keep delegates bound out of "arrogance, inexperience, and paranoia." One Carter delegate told the Kennedyites: "You clean-fingernailed limousine liberals are not going to deprive us of the victory we've won." But that was as personal as the arguments got. The debate was mostly principled, with the Kennedy people accusing the Carterites of trying to turn convention delegates into "robots" and the Carterites claiming that Kennedy was trying to change the rules of the contest after it was over. Both sides were right. As a matter of policy, the new rule does eliminate the deliberative function of Democratic delegates at this and future conventions. It is a bad rule that ought to be repealed. But it was the rule governing this year's

primary election process, and for Kennedy to try to change it in a last-ditch effort to win is unfair.

But what's important at the moment is how the Democratic contest continues through the convention—and whether it will end when the convention is over. If Kennedy is merely pursuing an honest cause, he will fight hard for what he believes, concede defeat, and help Carter battle Reagan. If Kennedy is operating out of personal animus against Carter, he also will try to bog down the New York convention with delaying tactics and wreck Carter's TV show. He might also decline to support Carter, or do so weakly, encouraging liberals to vote for Anderson or stay at home. That, on top of all of his other troubles, might mean certain defeat for Carter, much as party strife defeated Hubert Humphrey in 1968.

But there is a thin ray of hope left for Carter, even then. If Kennedy, the liberal ideologue, denies his endorsement to Carter, accusing him of "Republican" tendencies, Carter could turn this to his advantage. He could make himself out to be the besieged centrist, fighting for moderation and fiscal responsibility against leftist extremism. And then, if he skillfully maneuvers Reagan (or Reagan maneuvers himself) into indefensible right-wing stances on defense and social issues, Carter could begin to control the political middle. This will be a hard act, but it has been done before against all the smart money—by Harry Truman in 1948.

Morton Kondracke

A litmus test for leadership.

Farming for Dollars

Last month the Supreme Court finally settled a 50-year dispute over a huge federal subsidy to California agribusiness. It ruled unanimously that Congress did not intend to make land in the Imperial Valley, which is served by a federal irrigation project connected to the Hoover Dam, subject to a 1902 law limiting subsidized federal water to small family farms. Whatever Congress may have intended half a century ago, today's Congress stood ready to overturn the result if the Court had ruled the other way. Last month's Court decision suggests that politicians 50 years ago were just as solicitous of prosperous farmers as politicians are today.

Complaints about "special interest groups" have become the common currency of editorial writers and politicians alike. Almost everyone now agrees that a key problem with our economy and our politics is the power of organized groups to protect their interests in ways that subvert the goals of society as a whole. *TNR* has called this phenomenon "the new feudalism."

Economist Lester Thurow calls it "the zero-sum society." Probably the clearest example of such an interest group is farmers. What the presidential candidates have said and done about farm policy, therefore, is a good measure of their ration of those celebrated commodities, leadership and political courage.

In the popular myth, propagated by such farm organizations as the American Agricultural Movement (which led the unsuccessful "farm strike" of 1978), the farmer is a throwback to the days of old-fashioned rugged individualism. But in reality the farmer is protected against every contingency by a dizzying array of federal assistance programs that make the Chrysler bailout look like small change.

Since the 1930s, when the federal government first became thoroughly entangled in agriculture, probably no sector of the economy has gotten more help. Farmers get the sort of protection from the vagaries of the market that other industries can only dream about. What other industry enjoys guaranteed prices? If prices fall below the "price support" level set by the Agriculture Department, farmers growing any of several different commodities (including wheat, soybeans, feed grains, rice, tobacco, and others) can cash in on two federal programs. First, they can put their crop in storage, take out a loan for what the USDA says it should be worth, and wait for the market to improve. If prices remain low, they can keep the loan and let the government keep the crop. Not only that, but they also are entitled to "deficiency payments." These subsidies work as follows. The current price support level for wheat is \$2.50 per bushel. The "target price" level for deficiency payments is \$3.08. The going price for wheat is now \$3.78. If it were to drop below \$2.50, the wheat farmer would be able to get a "loan" of \$2.50 for each bushel, plus a payment of 58 cents for each bushel (the difference between the price support level and the target price level). In effect the wheat farmer is guaranteed a minimum price of \$3.08 per bushel, and farmers who agree to certain restrictions on the amount of land planted are entitled to \$3.63.

These guaranteed prices, something no other industry gets, are the biggest but not the only subsidy to farmers. They also are eligible for a variety of loans and loan guarantees. If a farmer wants to buy or redevelop land or refinance a previous purchase, the FmHA will guarantee payment of a private loan, and if the farmer can't get a loan, the FmHA will lend the money itself. Likewise, if a farmer needs money to pay for normal operating expenses, like seed and fertilizer, the FmHA will either guarantee or provide a loan. Farmers affected by natural disasters or poor economic conditions who can't find private loans also can get "emergency loans" from the agency. The Small Business Administration also provides disaster loans to farmers.

As if all this weren't enough, the government also protects many farmers from competition from abroad.

Imports of such items as peanuts, sugar, and non-perishable dairy goods all are subject to hefty tariffs. These serve to keep prices acceptably high.

What's wrong with all these subsidies to farmers? Just about everything. Besides existing only to benefit a narrow special interest group—just the sort of program Jimmy Carter promised to dismantle when he campaigned four years ago—farm programs interfere with the normal processes of the market. The reason American farmers suffer from chronically low prices is that the government encourages them to overproduce. Normally, low prices would serve to reduce production by forcing out inefficient producers and encouraging those remaining to grow other, more profitable, crops. By holding prices artificially high, the government actually encourages overproduction, thus aggravating the very problem it is supposed to be easing.

But probably the worst feature of farm subsidies is that they take money from the poor and give to the rich. They do this in two ways. First, they inflate the price of necessities—bread, milk, sugar, rice. The higher prices naturally hit hardest at the poor, who spend a larger share of their income on staple foods than the affluent do. The second way in which these programs redistribute income in the wrong direction is through direct loans and payments from taxpayers to farmers. These often are defended as essential to preserving that revered American institution, the family farm. But the great bulk of the benefits goes to big, wealthy farmers. Last year farms with sales of more than \$40,000 made up only 22 percent of all farms, but they got 57 percent of all government payments. The average payment to the biggest farms was more than triple the average payment. Plainly the farm programs are subsidizing the very people who are least in need of help, at the expense of those most in need.

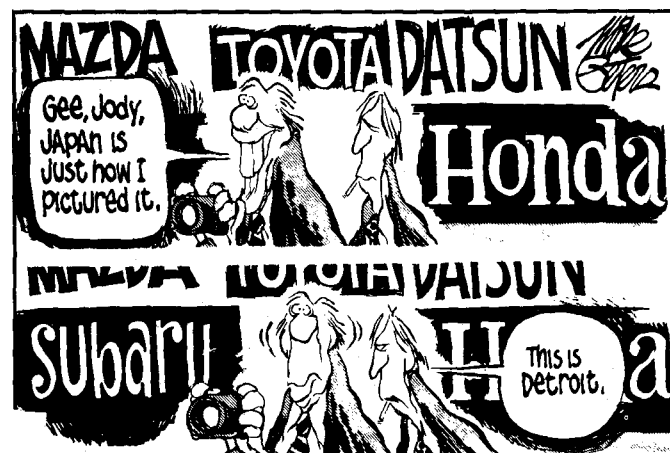
So far there is not much evidence that any of the three major presidential candidates understands the problem, much less intends to correct it. The best that can be said of President Carter's overall record on farm issues is that he has helped to restrain Congress from even greater excesses. When the striking farmers demanded much higher prices and Congress was considering a measure to meet them more than halfway, the administration pushed through a more modest bill—preferable to the alternative, but still too generous. When Senator Frank Church introduced a bill to emasculate the 1902 Reclamation Act by allowing farms of up to 1280 acres on federally irrigated land and permitting absentee landlords, the Interior Department proposed a more reasonable relaxation of the original rules but ignored the possibility of requiring farmers who get federal water to pay a greater share of what it costs to provide. Carter lobbied hard, and successfully, for ratification of an international sugar treaty, a pact whose likely effect will be to raise sugar prices (see "Vying To Be Sugar Daddy," *TNR*, October 7, 1978). The administration has made much of its programs to promote gasohol, an expensive fuel which

right now serves no purpose but enriching grain farmers (see "Gasoholics Agronomous," *TNR*, June 30, 1979).

A good example of Carter's generosity to farmers is the dairy industry, traditionally one of the most politically powerful agricultural sectors. In 1977 Congress passed a farm bill which, among other things, increased the minimum price support level for milk from 75 to 80 percent of parity. Carter had threatened to veto the bill but eventually backed down. One result is that milk price supports have risen by 50 percent in only three and a half years.

Ronald Reagan's views on farm subsidies are deliberately vague, as demonstrated by his misleading statement to one group of farmers that he didn't understand the concept of "parity," a crude and archaic way of setting price supports to which farmers are deeply attached. In the past, Reagan has revealed not only that he knows what parity is, but that he knows it's a stupid idea; but he's trying to put this wisdom behind him. Reagan's position papers on agriculture manage to avoid any mention of the various subsidies, preferring to emphasize his opposition to the grain embargo, his concern about inflation and fuel supplies, and his intention to promote more agricultural exports. But these are side issues. The important issue is whether the federal government should continue to channel huge subsidies to farmers. There is little reason to think Reagan would try to phase them out. A candidate who is so studiously silent on the crucial agricultural issues isn't likely to do anything very bold if he gets to the White House.

But probably the worst of the three on farm issues is John Anderson, whose years of representing a district in a major farm state have turned him into a shameless shill for federal farm subsidies. Anderson's position paper on agriculture stresses the need to "restore financial security to the family farm," which is one way of saying "give the farmers more money." He boasts of voting for one measure aimed at "controlling overproduction" (read: raising prices) and for another which "raised price support levels for most commodities." Anderson also brags of how he "led the floor fight to try to delete the carryover basis provision from the House Tax Reform Bill in 1976 so that farm families can



transfer the title to their farm land (the product of lifelong efforts) to their heirs without having the land taxed at the inflated value." This tax loophole (which Congress reopened this year) is billed as a way to help preserve the family farm, but in fact it merely protects from taxation the huge profits farm families make when they sell their land outside the family (often to real estate developers). Coming from the candidate who preaches the need for sacrifice—Anderson told *Playboy* that as president he might be "reminiscent of the prophet Jeremiah"—this emphasis on preserving the lucrative privileges of a single special interest group is a little jarring. Anderson got much credit from many people (including me) for his willingness to defend President Carter's grain embargo during the Iowa primary campaign. But that appears to be Anderson's only act of statesmanship on farm issues.

If you want to know what's wrong with the American political system, you'd be hard pressed to find a better case study. The farm program serves no purpose but to enrich a special interest at the expense of those who can least afford it. As public policy the farm program is a disaster. Any presidential candidate who isn't serious about getting rid of all these special favors isn't serious.

Stephen Chapman

The GOP, motherhood, and the ERA.

About Face

The Republican party's decision to remove endorsement of the Equal Rights Amendment from the party platform, where the ERA has been included routinely since 1940, shows how conservative the party is becoming. There's been nothing like the fuss in the Republican platform committee last week since 1926, when the National Woman's party (pro) and the Women's Bureau (anti) quarreled at the Second Conference on Women in Industry in Washington. For years the amendment wasn't even controversial. In 1972 Ronald Reagan offered the use of his name in support of it. Not until the mid-1970s, when state ratification efforts began to fail, did it become apparent that a large, visible opposition had emerged—presumably in response to the rise of a large, visible feminist movement.

The Women's Bureau, sponsors of the 1926 conference, had omitted consideration of an equal rights amendment from the agenda. When Gail Laughlin, a Woman's party officer, took the floor to demand that equal rights be considered, her militant compatriots seconded with shouts. "Get up and yell," the party's floor leader told them. "You've got good lungs." Women's Bureau loyalists countered with hisses and

clapping, the latter to drown out the voices of the opposition. The demonstration lasted nearly an hour. "If I had not seen them with my own eyes," one delegate wrote of the Woman's party radicals, "no one could have made me believe there could be such a diabolical group of women."

The ERA did not remain radical for long. By 1944 both parties had endorsed it, congressional efforts to approve it were under way, and public debate was intermittent (and usually covered on the women's pages). But alas, the ERA is no longer considered (for want of a better term) a motherhood issue.

On July 9 the human resources subcommittee of the Republican platform committee adopted a women's rights plank which fails to endorse the ERA. It reaffirms "our party's historic commitment to equal rights" but opposes a women's military draft or "any move that would give the Federal Government more power over families." The plank leaves questions of ratification and deadline extension to state legislatures and the courts, and protests federal pressure ("at the direction of the White House") against states that refuse to ratify the ERA. Not surprisingly, the Republican Women's Task Force finds both this draft and a compromise proposed by Reagan, which also stops short of endorsement, unacceptable.

The Republicans, these women will remind you, were instrumental in ratifying the Nineteenth (Suffrage) Amendment in 1920. As early as 1896, a Republican platform asserted that the party was "mindful of the rights and interests of women," promised to seek "equal pay for equal work," and welcomed female "co-operation in rescuing the country from Democratic and Populist mismanagement and misrule." In 1923 Daniel Anthony and Charles Curtis, both Republicans, submitted an equal rights amendment to the House and Senate. Anthony was the nephew of the well-known suffragette Susan B. Anthony; Curtis subsequently became Herbert Hoover's vice president. Through the actions of the two men, a feminist, pro-ERA constituency was inherited by the GOP. In 1940, the Republicans became the first major party to endorse the ERA.

Since the 1920s, Republicans consistently have supported the ERA. The ERA was endorsed in all but two Republican platforms after 1940. (It was omitted in 1964 and 1968.) The Democrats endorsed the ERA only four times in the same period—in 1944, 1948, 1972, and 1976. Democratic platforms from 1952 through 1968 favored a narrower, legislative approach, and usually specified only the need for laws guaranteeing equal pay for equal work. The difference between Democratic and Republican commitments to the ERA is ultimately traceable to a split that occurred in the feminist movement after 1920. Groups such as the Women's Bureau and the League of Women Voters, representing a majority, sought a moderate approach to the establishment of equal rights after the Suffrage Amendment was ratified. This approach ensured the

survival of protective legislation (such as minimum wage and maximum hour laws) shielding working women from the rigors endured by their male counterparts. Because of their pro-labor sympathies, a large proportion of women in these groups later became New Deal Democrats. The National Woman's party, led by the radical feminist Alice Paul, represented a minority—it never had more than 8,000 members—which favored equal rights regardless of the consequences for protective legislation. Because it was, in a limited sense, pro-business, its members tended to be drawn into the Republican party of Herbert Hoover.

Alice Paul proposed the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923. The amendment read, "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction." Throughout the 1920s and 1930s it drew sharp criticism. Mary Anderson, head of the Women's Bureau, called equal rights a "slogan" indicative of Paul's "hysterical feminism." Felix Frankfurter wrote that the "meaningless and mischievous phrase" betokened ignorance of or indifference to "the exacting aspects of women's life." Al Smith remarked in the course of his 1928 campaign, "I believe in equality, but I cannot nurse a baby." To the criticisms of Democratic social reformers concerned about the fate of protective legislation, Paul answered that the problem might be solved "by raising the standard of protective labor laws for men until they are equal to those in existence . . . for women." The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 was a great stride toward this goal, establishing wage and hour limitations for both men and women. Still, Democrats withheld support of the ERA for six more years.

Woman's party lobbyists made a deliberate effort to keep a low profile at the 1940 Republican convention in Philadelphia. Four years earlier the ERA had been rejected by Republicans on the grounds that demands for other constitutional amendments on behalf of women would proliferate, and many still remembered the disruptiveness of the "diabolical group" at the 1926 conference on women in industry. The Woman's party strategy apparently was all too successful: news accounts of the convention say little about the ERA. No discussion of the ERA or any other plank was brought to the floor. Wendell Willkie did not mention the ERA in his acceptance speech. A 1940 *TNR* "Voters' Handbook" fails to single out the ERA or any other plank in either the Democratic or Republican platform, though it does note that the Republicans "plump for a return to laissez-faire," while Democrats "recognize the need for a new set of answers."

According to the records of the Woman's party, no women's organizations opposed to the ERA spoke against it in the Republican platform hearings—an inexplicable bit of luck for the Woman's party lobbyists—which helps explain how the proposal passed without floor debate. Opposing women's groups *did* show up for the 1940 Democratic convention

in Chicago, however, and succeeded in defeating Woman's party efforts there.

Democratic efforts to draft an ERA plank in 1940 may also have been thwarted by labor, despite the 1938 passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act, for reasons not wholly benign. Protective laws, after all, did limit the size of a female labor force. As late as 1955 the AFL-CIO adopted a resolution opposing the ERA. The group was, of course, overwhelmingly male. The Republican party, less committed to the needs of the working man, was less susceptible to labor pressure, and consequently found itself more vigorously committed to the working woman.

The years between 1940 and 1972 saw so little debate on the issue of the ERA that one might wonder whether, with the necessity for protective women's legislation and the pressures of male-dominated labor somewhat abated, there was much to talk about. What has made the ERA controversial? Why are the Republicans so nervous about having, for once, been right?

Timothy Noah

Timothy Noah, a TNR summer intern, recently graduated from Harvard College.

Washington's newest tourist attraction.

Watergate Live

Every morning at 8:00, while much of Washington's population is downing coffee or running for buses, people already are lining up for tickets to Washington's newest tourist attraction: the Nixon Watergate tapes. One would think that scholars, lawyers, and journalists would be flocking by the hundreds to hear the historic tapes, but the frazzled woman in front of me—complete with bouffant hair-do and sunburned face—does not look like a lawyer or even a journalist. Neither does her companion, with whom she is discussing a recent family wedding ("They had a buffet you just wouldn't believe!"). A young man behind me with a Boston accent boasted that he would be the first of his friends to hear the tapes. "They're all waiting for me to come home and tell them about it," he said.

A fresh-faced Indiana high school student introduced me to his three friends, also fresh-faced students from Indiana (all high school students from west of Pittsburgh are fresh faced). They're all Nixon fans who believe the former president was guilty of covering up the Watergate scandal, but who nevertheless admire him because "he stood up for his men." I wondered aloud whether the tapes would justify their admiration, to which they replied (rather emphatically, I thought)

"Of course! Why not?"

Security is abnormally tight for what amounts to a tourist attraction. A guard stationed at the door asked each person for identification, and everyone was taken up to the listening room at the same time in the same elevator. At one point while listening to a tape, I took off the headphones, and immediately was ordered to put them back on. Apparently officials were afraid I would record the tapes from my headphones—secretly tape the secret tapes.

According to National Archives officials, all sessions except the earliest morning session have been filled to capacity (30 people), with some people being placed on stand-by, like airplane passengers. The tapes were released for public listening because the law says that all evidence used in trials involving government wrongdoing must be available for public scrutiny. Needless to say, the Watergate tapes are by far the most popular evidence of perfidy in high places.

Many people return to listen to a particular favorite—such as the "smoking gun" tape, currently the most popular. The audience derives as much pleasure from the optimism of the early tapes (John Dean to the president: "I think you're still five steps ahead of what will ever emerge publicly."), as it does from the grasping-at-straws desperation of the later tapes (Haldeman: "This silly-ass damn thing.").

The tapes are played in the order they were presented in court, in sessions about an hour each over a three-day period. Headphones, as well as a printed manuscript, are provided at each desk. As we entered the two-story library in the National Archives building where the tapes are played, tickets were collected and a cheery-voiced guide explained procedures to the listeners. The tape for this particular session is an oldie but goodie from 1971: Nixon, John Connally, OMB director George Shultz, and several bit players are discussing the possibility of raising milk prices in order to win friends in the powerful milk industry. The tape was greeted with mirth at times (Connally: "The dairymen are organized and they're militant."). Occasionally the audience burst into simultaneous laughter, which was odd if you weren't wearing headphones and couldn't hear the joke. This happened when John Ehrlichman admonished, "Better go get a glass of milk. Drink it while it's cheap." As the group from the first session filed out, I asked my friends from Indiana, who were going to stick around for a few more sessions, what they thought of the tape. "We've decided politics is politics. Nixon wasn't an aberration," a spokesperson replied after they had huddled together. Meanwhile, next to me a middle-aged man gleefully scrutinized the manuscript of the upcoming "smoking gun" tape. "I want to hear him speak the words," he said maliciously.

There were amusing moments in most tapes (in one, the president tapped his pencil to the beat of a Sousa march while he discussed the Watergate cover-up) but not in the smoking gun. There was no laughter, not

even at the jokes (Nixon: "Don't bug anyone without asking me."). Even the Nixon-hater beside me said nothing when Nixon pathetically reduced Watergate to a "public relations" problem.

My four friends from Indiana were extremely downhearted. They were no longer fresh faced—in fact, by now they looked ready for college. There was a lot of hemming and hawing before they admitted they wouldn't vote for Nixon now, let alone admire him. "I expected to like him more after hearing the tapes," one told me sadly. "But they are really insulting to the former president. And he deserves it."

Aphrodite Valleras

Aphrodite Valleras, a TNR summer intern, is entering her senior year at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Fun Group stops playing games.

Monopoly Monopoly

There used to be at least one aspect of the filthy, greedy, money-grubbing, dog-eat-dog capitalist system we could all revel in: Monopoly. I refer, of course, not to the corporate practice of cornering as much of a market as possible before the Antitrust Division of the Justice Department steps in, but to the board game most of us began playing in childhood. You could always play Monopoly with the sole intent of driving everybody else bankrupt and hoarding all the wealth while wallowing in the joy of it like a pig in mud, never giving a damn about the ethics involved. As humorist Shelley Berman put it, "Monopoly evokes a unique emotion, the surge of thrill you get when you know you've wiped out a friend."

Sooner or later, some moralistic spoilsport had to come along and ruin everybody's fun. That someone was San Francisco State University economics professor Ralph Anspach, who discovered several years ago that Monopoly isn't all it appears to be. Anspach, the inventor of a game called Anti-Monopoly, found that Monopoly was invented in 1904 as The Landlord's Game by Lizzie J. Magie, a resident of Maryland, as a way of teaching the evils of land monopolism. She was a follower of the single-tax theories of Henry George (1839-97), who preached that the economic rent of land and the unearned increase in land values profited a few individuals rather than the majority of the people whose very existence produced the land values. George thought a single tax, on land alone, would erode the power of monopolies to suppress competition and would equalize opportunities.

Magie's board looked like the one now labeled

"Monopoly," except that its properties bore names such as Poverty Place, Easy Street, Soakum Lighting System, Lord Blueblood's Estate (no trespassing—go to jail). Her game was played folk style, like Battleships, by hundreds of people, most of them on the East Coast, who made their own boards and changed the rules and names of properties. As early as 1910 the game was being called "Monopoly."

In 1931 an unemployed ne'er-do-well from Philadelphia, Charles Darrow, played Monopoly with some Quaker friends at Atlantic City. They used a board that looked almost exactly like the later Parker Brothers version, with the Atlantic City names: Boardwalk, Park Place, Vermont Avenue, and the rest. Since it was a game developed gradually by many people, none of Darrow's friends considered trying to sell it. But he thought of doing so immediately.

Darrow copied the board used by one of his friends who had misspelled the Atlantic City suburb of Marven Gardens as "Marvin Gardens." He submitted it that way to the giant games-making firm, Parker Brothers, passing off Monopoly as his own invention. Parker Brothers bought the game as submitted by Darrow and registered a patent on it, misspelling and all.

Within a year of buying and patenting the game, Parker Brothers management discovered Darrow's fraud. Instead of coming clean and admitting right away that Monopoly was in the public domain like chess and checkers and could not be patented by anybody, Parker's board of directors decided to perpetuate the fraud with phony press releases about "Darrow's invention." Parker executives traveled around the country buying up all the old Monopoly boards they could find in the hope of destroying all evidence that might be produced in some future lawsuit. They succeeded in having their way for four decades, until Ralph Anspach discovered the true history of the game and some old boards Parker missed.

If Parker Brothers had only left Anspach alone and let him manufacture and sell his own game, Anti-Monopoly, without harassing him, he may never have dug up the origin of Monopoly at all, and we might have been able to go on viewing the game as a childlike glorification of the capitalist system. But no, Parker Brothers had to sue Anspach for trademark infringement, and that induced him to poke into the history of Monopoly. Out popped the secret that had been kept for 40 years.

In 1971, when Anspach invented his "Bust-the-Trust game" as a satire on Monopoly and the most delightfully brutal aspects of the American economic system, he designed the board, playing pieces, and rules to parody the Parker Brothers's product. As the preface to his rules Anspach wrote:

Your goal in this game is to break up the monopolistic groups you see on the board in front of you. For example, Fort Auto, Crystal Auto, and General Auto are three big

companies belonging to the auto group that has worked out a system to keep prices high and competitors out of the market. This is illegal, but they are getting away with it—unless you and the other trustbusting lawyers in the game can stop them. The trust-buster who does the best job of enforcing the law against monopolies wins.

Parker Brothers apparently didn't think this was funny. Instead of gritting their teeth and smiling at Anspach's pranks, Parker executives flipped. The louder they expressed their rage, the more attention the public paid to Anspach's game. By 1975 you could walk into chain bookstores such as Brentano's and find Anti-Monopoly displayed alongside Monopoly. In four years Anspach sold more than 400,000 sets of his Anti-Monopoly game, and although that left him far short of Parker Brothers's 80 million sales of Monopoly since 1935, he managed to gross around a million dollars. He used up the profits countersuing Parker Brothers and having fun traveling around the country debunking the Monopoly game.

On April 4, 1977, however, Anspach's fun and games were interrupted by the decision of a US District Court judge in San Francisco that Anti-Monopoly infringed Parker Brothers's trademark for Monopoly. Use of the word "monopoly" in another game, Judge Spencer Williams ruled, would "confuse the public." He thus enabled Parker Brothers to monopolize the word "monopoly" in game titles. Anspach was ordered to pay all of Parker's court costs and deliver all Anti-Monopoly sets still under his control to the court for destruction. Parker paid to have Anspach's games buried at a garbage dump in Mankato, Minnesota.

But Anspach was undeterred, as moralists usually are. He merely eliminated "monopoly" from his game title, called it "Anti," and went on selling it and lecturing around the country about the evils of monopolism, illustrated now by a federal judge's allowing a monopolistic gamesmaking firm to rip off a folk game and monopolize a common word in the English language. He also appealed Judge Williams's decision.

These days, Parker Brothers is no longer just a firm in Salem, Massachusetts, operating in an industry that once thrived off scores of independent inventors. Parker now is owned by General Mills Fun Group, one of several giant corporations that have monopolized the toys and games business. The Fun Group, in turn, is owned by General Mills, Inc., which used to be nothing more than a miller manufacturing Gold Medal Flour, Betty Crocker cake mixes, and Wheaties cereal, and a sponsor of such classic radio adventures as "Jack Armstrong, the all-American boy." Today General Mills is a billion dollar conglomerate churning out cereals, snack foods, toys, games, bubblegum, vitamins, toothbrushes, clothing, chemicals, mining operations, restaurants, and other services and products that fill a dozen pages in the corporation's annual report to the stockholders.

None of this was lost on Anspach, who delighted in pointing out how General Mills, the manufacturer of

the game that glorifies the greediest aspects in our economic system, was the subject of Justice Department and Federal Trade Commission actions. Justice and the FTC have raked General Mills for fixing prices, driving out competitors with unfair business practices, and deceiving children through advertisements promising better nutrition and health from eating cereals that are little more than crispy flakes of sugar and starch reinforced with vitamins.

Last December, the US Court of Appeals in San Francisco unanimously overruled Judge Williams. In rendering its decision, the appellate court focused not on whether Anspach has a valid trademark but on whether Parker Brothers/General Mills has a valid one for Monopoly. Displaying obvious displeasure with the way Judge Williams handled the litigation, the appeals court justices threw out all of the Parker/General Mills arguments for infringement and instructed Williams to review the evidence that Monopoly is a game in the public domain. At the first trial, for instance, Williams had refused to consider testimony from elderly people who described how they helped invent and shape the Monopoly game between 1910 and 1930, before Darrow and Parker Brothers got hold of it.

In ordering Judge Williams to hold another trial, the Court of Appeals instructed him to determine whether

the word "monopoly" is considered by the public as the game itself or the name of its producer. If the public considers "a game name to denote the game itself, and not its producer, the trademark is generic and, therefore, invalid," the appellate court ruled. Judge Williams, the court decided, could set conditions to assure that Anti-Monopoly is not confused with Monopoly in the public's mind, and allow Anspach to continue marketing his game under its original title as long as the conditions are followed. Consequently, Anspach has been able to force Parker Brothers/General Mills to pay him \$75,000 for the games they destroyed, and to resume manufacturing and selling Anti-Monopoly under that title.

But Anspach is not content to rest with his David-over-Goliath victory. Now he is planning to chop up his enemy through an antitrust action against General Mills for Parker Brothers's 40-year-long deception in claiming Monopoly as the fun-oriented invention of Charles Darrow. "You may as well claim he invented fire or the wheel," Anspach cracks.

Burton H. Wolfe

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The immutability of class.

A Dirge for Social Climbers

by Paul Fussell

If the dirty little secret used to be sex, it is now social class. No subject today is more likely to offend. Thirty years ago Dr. Kinsey generated considerable alarm by disclosing that 25 percent of the male population has enjoyed at least one homosexual orgasm. A similar alarm can be occasioned now by asserting that despite the much-discussed mechanisms of "social mobility" and the constant redistribution of income in this country, it is virtually impossible to break out of the social class in which one has been nurtured. Bad news for the ambitious as well as for the bogus, but there it is.

Defining class is difficult, as sociologists and anthropologists have learned. The more data we feed into the machines, the less likely it is that significant formulations will emerge. What follows here is not based on interviews, questionnaires, or any kind of scientific technique but on perhaps a more trustworthy

method—observation. Theory may inform us that there are three classes in this country: high, middle, and low. Observation will tell us that there are at least 10, which I would designate and arrange like this:

Top Out-of-Sight
Upper
Upper Middle
Middle

High Proletarian
Mid-Proletarian
Low Proletarian

Destitute
Bottom Out-of-Sight

In addition, there is a floating class with no precise location in this hierarchy. We can call it Class X. It

consists of well-to-do hippies, "artists," "writers" (most of them write nothing), floating bohemians, politicians out of office, disgraced athletic coaches, residents abroad, rock stars, "celebrities," and the shrewder sorts of spies.

The quasi-official division of the population into three economic classes called high-, middle-, and low-income groups misses the point, because as a class indicator the source of money is almost as important as the amount. Key distinctions at both the top and the bottom of the class hierarchy arise less from degree of affluence than from the people or institutions to whom one is beholden for support. For example, the main thing distinguishing the three top classes from one another is the amount of money inherited in relation to the amount currently earned. The Top Out-of-Sight class (Rockefellers, du Ponts, Mellons, Fords, Whitneys) lives entirely on inherited capital. There, money is like the hats of the Boston ladies who, asked where they get them, answer, "Oh, we *have* our hats." No one whose ample money has come from his own work, like film stars, can be a member of the Top Out-of-Sights, even if the size of his current income and the extravagance of his expenditure permit him temporary social access to it.

Since extremes meet, it is not surprising to find the very lowest class, Bottom Out-of-Sight, similar to the highest in one crucial respect: it is given its money. It is kept sort of afloat by either the welfare machinery or the prison system. Members of the Top Out-of-Sight class sometimes earn money, as directors or board members of philanthropic or even profitable enterprises, but the amount earned is insignificant in relation to the amount already possessed. Membership in the Top Out-of-Sight class depends on the ability to flourish without working at all, and this is what unites the classes at the top and the bottom of the scale. This also is what distinguishes members of the Upper class from their superiors in Top Out-of-Sight. The Upper class lives on both inherited money and a salary from their attractive, usually slight, work, without which, even if it could survive, or even flourish, it would feel bored and a little ashamed. The next class down, the Upper Middle, may possess virtually as much as the two above it. The difference is that the Upper Middle class has earned most of it, in law, medicine, or the more honorific sorts of trade. The Upper Middles are afflicted with a bourgeois sense of shame, a conviction that to live on the earnings of others, even forebears, is not entirely nice.

The Out-of-Sight classes at top and bottom have something else in common: they are literally all but invisible. The facades of Top Out-of-Sight houses never are seen from the street, and such residences (like Rockefeller's upstate New York premises) often are hidden away deep in the hills, safe from envy with its inseparable attendants, confiscatory taxation and expropriation, or at least disapproval. The Bottom Out-

of-Sight class is equally invisible. When not hidden away in institutions, monasteries, lamaseries, nunneries, or communes, it is hiding from creditors, deceived bail-bondsmen, and merchants intent on repossessing cars and furniture. When you see a house with a would-be impressive facade addressing the street, you know it is occupied by a mere member of the Upper or the Upper Middle class. The White House is an example. Its residents, even on those occasions when they are Kennedys, never can be classified as Top Out-of-Sight; they are only Upper class. Temporary residence in the White House, just because it presents itself so conspicuously to the street, usually constitutes a comedown for some of its occupants. It is a hopelessly Upper- or Upper-Middle-class place.

Another shared feature of the Top and Bottom Out-of-Sight classes is their anxiety to keep their names out of the papers. This too suggests that socially the president is always rather vulgar. All the classes in between lust for personal publicity; this, almost as much as income, distinguishes them from their top and bottom neighbors. The High and Mid-Prole classes can be recognized by their pride in advertising their physical presence, a way of saying, "Look! We pay our bills and have a place in the community." Thus hypertrophied house numbers, or house numbers written "Two Hundred Five" instead of 205, or flamboyant house or family names blazoned on facades, like "The Willows" or "The Polnickis." If you go behind the facade into the house itself, you will find the kind of wood there an instant class indicator. The top three classes invariably go in for hardwoods for doors and paneling; the Middle and High-Prole classes, pine, either plain or "knotty." The knotty-pine "den" is an absolute stigma of the Middle class, one that never can be overcome or disguised by temporarily affected higher usages.

Facade study is a badly neglected anthropological field. As we work down from the (largely white) bank-like facades of the Upper and Upper Middle classes, we find such Middle and Prole conventions as these, which I rank in order of social status:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Middle | 1. A potted tree on either side of the front door. |
| | 2. A large rectangular picture-window in a split-level "ranch" house, displaying a lamp table between two side drapes. The cellophane on the lampshade must be unviolated. |
| | 3. Two chairs, usually metal, disposed on the front porch as "a conversation group," in dramatic disregard for the traffic thundering past. |
| High-Prole | 4. Religious shrines in the garden, which, if small and understated, are slightly higher class than |
| Mid-Prole | 5. Plaster gnomes and flamingos, and blue or lavender shiny spheres supported by fluted cast-concrete pedestals. |
| Low-Prole | 6. Defunct truck tires painted white and |

enclosing flower beds. (Auto tires are a grade higher.)

7. Flower-bed designs worked in dead light bulbs or the butts of beer bottles.

The Destitute have no facades to decorate, and of course the Bottom Out-of-Sights, being invisible, have none either, although both these classes can occasionally help others decorate theirs—painting tires white on an hourly basis, for example, or even watering and fertilizing the potted trees of the Middle class. Class X also does not decorate its facades, hoping to stay loose and unidentifiable, ready to relocate at the slightest sign that its cover has been penetrated.

As we move down the scale, income of course decreases, but income is less important to class than other seldom-invoked measurements: the degree to which one's work is supervised by an omnipresent immediate superior, for example. The more free from supervision, the higher the class, which is why a dentist ranks higher than a mechanic working under a foreman in a large auto shop, even if the mechanic makes considerably more money than the dentist. The two trades may be thought equally dirty: it is the dentist's freedom from supervision that confers class upon him. Likewise, a high school teacher obliged to file weekly "lesson plans" with a principal or "curriculum coordinator" thereby occupies a class position lower than a tenured professor, who reports to no one, even though the high school teacher may be richer, smarter, and nicer. It is largely for this reason that even the highest members of the naval and military services lack high social status.

Class is thus defined less by bare income than by constraints and insecurities. It is defined also by habits and attitudes. Take television watching. The Top Out-of-Sight class doesn't watch at all. It owns the companies and pays others to monitor the thing. It is also entirely devoid of intellectual or even emotional curiosity. The Upper class watches, but prefers camp offerings, like the films of Jean Harlow or Jon Hall. The Upper-Middle class regards TV as vulgar except for the high-minded emissions of the Public Broadcasting System, which it watches avidly. Upper-Middles make a point of forbidding children to watch more than an hour a day and worry a lot about violence in society and sugar in cereal. The Middle class watches, preferring the nicer kinds of non-body-contact sports, like tennis or acrobatics or figure skating. With High, Mid-, and Low Proles we find heavy viewing of the soaps in the afternoon and rugged body-contact sports (football, hockey, boxing) in the evening and on weekends. The lower one is located in the Prole classes, the more likely one is to watch "Bowling for Dollars." Destitutes usually "own" about three color sets, and the problem is what three programs to watch at once. Bottom Out-of-Sights have no choice at all, the decisions being made for them by institutional personnel.

The time at which the evening meal is consumed defines class as well as anything. Bottom Out-of-Sights

EXERCISES

To what class would you assign each of the following?

1. A 55-year-old pilot for a feeder airline who cuts his own grass, watches wrestling on TV, and has a knotty-pine den?
2. A small-town podiatrist who says, "Have a nice day" and whose wife is getting very fat?
3. A young woman trust officer in a large New York bank who loves to watch Channel 13, WNET, and likes to be taken out to restaurants said to serve "gourmet" food?
4. Students of all kinds?

1. Pilots have roughly the same class as field-grade Army officers, that is, High Prole. Feeder airline pilots have less status than national airline pilots, and those who work for the longest-established international airlines like Pan Am and TWA have the highest status of all. The Middle-class den and the Mid-Prole TV wrestling addition cancel each other out.
2. At the moment, High Prole. If his wife gets much fatter, he will sink to Mid-Prole.
3. Middle, with hopeless fantasies about being Upper-Middle.
4. All students, regardless of age or institution attended, are Mid-Proles, as their large consumption of beer and convenience foods suggests. Sometimes they affect the used clothing of the Destitute, but we should not be fooled.

ANSWERS

eat dinner at 5:30, for the Prole staff on which they depend must clean up and be out roller-skating or bowling early in the evening, and so eats at 6:00 or 6:30. The Middles eat at 7:00, the Upper Middles at 7:30, or, if very ambitious, at 8:00. The Uppers and Top Out-of-Sights dine at 8:30 or 9:00 or even 9:30, after nightly protracted "cocktail" sessions lasting, usually, at least an hour and a half.

Similarly, the physical appearance of the various classes defines them fairly accurately. Among the top four classes thin is good, and the bottom two classes appear to ape this usage, although down there thin is seldom a matter of choice. It is the three Prole classes that tend to fat, partly as a result of convenience foods and beer. These are the classes too where anxiety about slipping down a rung generates nervous overeating, resulting in a fat that can be rationalized as advertising the security of steady wages and the consequent ability to "eat out" often. A recent ad for a diet book aimed at Proles stigmatizes a number of erroneous assumptions

about body weight, proclaiming with some inelegance that "They're all a crock." Among such vulgar errors is the proposition that "All Social Classes Are Equally Overweight." This the ad rejects by saying, quite accurately:

Your weight is an advertisement of your social standing. A century ago, corpulence was a sign of success. But no more. Today it is the badge of the lower-middle-class, where obesity is *four times* more prevalent than it is among the upper-middle and middle classes.

It is not just four times more prevalent. It is at least four times more visible, as any observer can testify who has witnessed Prole women perambulating shopping malls in their brightly colored tight jersey trousers. Not just obesity but the flaunting of obesity is the Prole sign.

Another physical feature with powerful class meaning is the wearing of plaster casts on legs and ankles by members of the top three classes. These casts, a sort of white badge of honor, betoken stylish mishaps with costly toys like horses, skis, snowmobiles, and mopeds. They signify a high level of conspicuous waste in a social world where the question of missed work days does not apply. But on the matter of clothes, the Top Out-of-Sight is different from both Upper and Upper-Middle classes. Top Out-of-Sight prefers to appear in new clothes, whereas the class just below it affects old clothes. Like Top Out-of-Sight, all three Prole classes make much of new garments. The question does not arise in the same form with Destitutes and Bottom Out-of-Sights. They wear used clothes from the thrift shop or the prison supply-room.

"Language most shows a man," writes Ben Jonson. "Speak, that I may see thee." As all acute conservatives like Johnson know, dictional behavior is a powerful signal of a firm class line. Nancy Mitford so indicated in her hilarious essay of 1955, "The English Aristocracy," based in part on Professor Alan S. C. Ross's more sober study "Linguistic Class-Indicators in Present-Day English." Both Mitford and Ross are interested in only one class demarcation, the one dividing the Upper class (or "U," in their shorthand) from all below it ("non-U"). Their main finding is that euphemism and genteelism are non-U. People who are socially secure risk nothing by calling a spade a spade, and indicate their top-dog status by doing so as frequently as possible. The U-word is "rich," the non-U word "wealthy." What U-speakers call "false teeth" non-U speakers call "dentures."

In America the situation is similar, although more classes are distinguishable here than in England. Here U-speech characterizes some Top Out-of-Sights, Uppers, Upper-Middles, and class Xs. All below is a wasteland of genteelism and jargon, sad evidence of the upward social scramble which inevitably fails.

One especially American linguistic class line divides those who persist in honoring the 19th-century convention that advertising, if not commerce itself, is reprehensible, and those proud to identify themselves as consumers, happy when they can imagine

themselves as happy members of the system by responding to advertisements. For U-persons a word's success in advertising is a compelling reason never to use it. But possessing no other source of idiom, the subordinate classes are pleased to appropriate the language of advertising for personal use, dropping brand-names all the time and saying things like "They have some lovely fashions at that store," where "fashions" means "clothes."

Those who employ the vacuous commercial "Have a nice day" and those who wouldn't think of saying it manifestly belong to different classes, and it is unlikely that those classes will ever merge. (One visiting Englishman of my acquaintance, a U-speaker if there ever was one, has devised the perfect U-response to "Have a nice day": "Thank you," he says, "but I have other plans.") The same ultimate divide separates the two classes which, when introduced, say respectively, "How do you do?" and "Pleased to meet you." There may be comity between those who say "prestigious" and those who don't, but it won't survive much strain. Members of these two classes can sit in adjoining seats on the plane and get along fine (although there's a further division between those who talk to their neighbors in elevators and planes and those who don't), but once the plane has emptied, they will go toward different destinations. The pretense that either person can feel really comfortable in the presence of the other is essential to the presiding American fiction.

Some people invite constant class trouble because they believe the official American publicity about these matters. The official theory, which experience is constantly disproving, is that one can earn one's way out of one's original class. Richard Nixon's behavior indicates that this is not so. The sign of the Upper class to which he aspired is total psychological security and freedom, expressed in loose carriage, saying what one likes, and an entire imperviousness to what others think. Nixon's vast income from law and politics—the San Clemente property aped the style of the Upper but not the Top Out-of-Sight class, for everyone knew where it was—could not alleviate his original awkwardness and meanness of soul or his nervousness about the impression he was making.

What, finally, marks the higher classes? Primarily a desire for privacy, if not invisibility, and a powerful instinct for freedom. It is this instinct for freedom that may persuade us that inquiring into the American class system and some of its signals is an enterprise not entirely adventitious and silly and merely amusing. Perhaps, after all, the whole thing has something to do with ethics and aesthetics. Perhaps a term like "gentleman" still retains some meanings that are not just sartorial and mannerly. Freedom and grace: it would be nice to believe those words still mean something, and it would be interesting if the class system should turn out to be a way of paying those concepts a due respect.

Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Jail, Joke, and Junk

Prison films feed a kind of voyeurism. The more serious and honest they are, the more voyeuristic. They let us look in safety at horror, cluck at conditions, and feel we have accomplished something by putting ourselves through two hours of heart-wrench; then they let us go home and take up our old lives in the same society that produced those conditions. Our only change is that we can cluck more authoritatively at parties when the subject of prisons comes up. Reform movements go on; so also, allowing for this or that improvement in sanitation or diet or instruction, do the horrors of prison. What possible alternative is there in a society swollen in population, stagnant in opportunity, racially torn, drug-riddled, and teleologically dim? I was told last year by an architect that prison-building is one of the few areas in the US construction field that are active these days.

The horrors of prison are taken as a constant. In the current comedy *Rough Cut* (see below), a genteel Scotland Yard inspector uses the threat of prison horror—not of imprisonment itself—as a blackmail weapon to make a kleptomaniac work for him. I know no reason to disbelieve that these horrors, in the best prisons as well as the worst, will continue; will occasionally be filmed factually or fictionally; will be deplored; will continue.

Brubaker is fiction, based—rather remotely, we're told—on some incidents in the life of Tom Murton, former warden of an Arkansas prison farm. In the screenplay by W. D. Richter, Brubaker is the new warden of a huge prison farm in an unnamed state who comes in as a convict with a bunch of new arrivals in order to get a line on conditions in the place. Not even the

present warden knows about this. Brubaker sees a lot of brutal and dehumanizing stuff and finally blows his cover in outrage at the treatment of men in solitary cells.

When he takes over, he tries to clean things up though he has no illusions about the inmates. He tries to buck the graft surrounding this institution and its 15,000-acre farm. He even unearths some bodies of murdered prisoners. (Murton did this in 1968.) Inevitably Brubaker fails and is fired for rocking various boats. We've all seen pictures about reformers before—politicians or hospital chiefs or air-base commanders or newspaper editors—and all of them end either with failure or very ambiguous hope. *Brubaker* opts for failure.

The film underscores two unpleasant truths about certain kinds of exposé films. Though they flatter us because we've sat through them, we haven't taken on any obligation. (Who will do anything because of *Brubaker*?) Second, we know how it's all going to end because the film is in the past and we're in the present: we know it can't have a credible upbeat ending. Robert Redford plays Brubaker, which of course is why the film got made, and he tries to sharpen little angles of reaction and perception throughout, but it's not a character, it's a set of attitudes in a very limited framework of possible actions. The script tries to extend that framework by including a woman, Jane Alexander, as the state official who hired Redford and has heated discussions with him about idealism vs. pragmatism, but she and their talk are transparently fabricated.

Authenticity note: "trusty," meaning a trusted and privileged convict, is pronounced "trustee" throughout. On

expert advice, I assume.

Some of the supporting actors are good, notably Yaphet Kotto and Morgan Freeman. Stuart Rosenberg once directed a better prison picture, *Cool Hand Luke* (1967), but he doesn't direct *Brubaker* any worse. The difference is in the scripts. *Luke* had an interesting protagonist, a convict of the Absurd. *Brubaker* is not about a man, it's about a situation populated with familiar characters moving familiarly out of the norm into an arc of attempted change and back to the norm.

I'm a Burt Reynolds fan. I don't expect him—don't want him—to be much different from one picture to the next. All I want a Reynolds film to do is give him a fair chance to be what he has always been, in a new, engaging set of circumstances. Some variety is possible: *W. W.* and *the Dixie Dancekings* had a differently colored Reynolds from *Starting Over*. But what I want, and usually get, are his ease, his congeniality, his wit of manner (if not always of dialogue), his pinpoint taciturn timing, and his counterpoint of genuine, tickled disbelief that he's really being paid a fortune for doing this, that we really want to pay to watch him. His inferrable amused view of his position seems part of his inferrable view of life: it gives him an agreeable, humane cynicism. What the Schnitzler-type monocled boulevardier was to continental plays and films earlier in the century, Burt Reynolds is to here and now.

Rough Cut is another big-heist story, set mostly in London and dealing with diamonds. No two sequences are credi-

Films Worth Seeing

Fame. When it sticks to what the title's about, it's good. High School of Performing Arts students in NYC, hot with talent and success drive. Their personal stories are drivel.

Norma Rae. Sally Field. A fight to unionize a southern mill. Sally Field.

The Outsider. An American enlists in the IRA today. Ignore the Detroit prologue and epilogue; most of it, in Ireland, is strong.

Rockers. Jamaican blacks play themselves in an invented story. Full of music and musical speech. Folk art, gently guided by the director, Theodoros Bafaloukos.

SK

ble in their succession, hardly any two lines, but for me it breezed along pleasantly enough because the leading role—a gentleman thief—was an acceptable variation within the Reynolds spectrum, because the dialogue and plot were at least good movie-candy munching, because many of the actors are smooth, Doug Stewart's editing is brisk, and Don Siegel is in a new kind of good form. Siegel, expert in such tough crime and criminal films as *Charley Varrick* and *Escape from Alcatraz*, here enters the velvet-glove league—the picture we're meant to remember, I think, is Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief*—and he works with his usual precision but with unusual lightness.

Lesley-Anne Down, who becomes Reynolds's partner in a couple of senses, has everything but sparkle. She's pretty and she's not an abysmal comedienne, but I simply can't remember her—I don't mean when the picture's over, I mean when she's off screen during the picture. On the other hand, there's David Niven, as an aging detective. (Niven, when young, had a good deal of the amused attractive "Who, me?" Reynolds quality.) And there are Isobel Dean, as Niven's wife, Timothy West, as an old crook, and Patrick Magee, as a still fervently Nazi ex-Luftwaffe pilot. And there's a score derived from Duke Ellington.

One of the plot's mysteries is why Reynolds refuses to work with a Dutch

pimp-assassin but is an old pal of the slaving Nazi pilot. One of the production's mysteries is why that good designer Ted Haworth was allowed—encouraged?—to overdo all the interiors. *Rough Cut* is a bit too obviously meant as summer fare, but for us Reynolds fans, the two hours glide.

Can't Stop the Music is too true a title. This is one more record-album film—made, it seems, chiefly to provide a sound-track album for the record shops. Nancy Walker, who directed, shows all the finesse we'd expect from her work as the waitress in the Bounty paper-towel TV commercials. A few of the production numbers—like "YMCA"—have some zing, but I suspect that the visual consultant, Steve Hendrickson, had a large hand in them.

The only notable member of the cast is Paul Sand, as a record-company tycoon, garlanded with phones, touch-toning his way through life. Bruce Jenner, the Olympic star, is the leading man. His performance, like the script, needs no comment, not even adverse.

One curious point. Gay people objected, are still objecting, to *Cruising*. I haven't seen any objections to *Music*, which is filled with unlabeled but obvious jokes about the heroine's "harmless" male roommate, leather men, etc. *Cruising* is exploitative fake-seriousness. *Music* is oblique mockery. So that's OK?

resilience, releasing a string of elaborate albums of atmospheric noodling, reproduced in marathon concerts of atmospheric noodling. By the end of the 1970s, Pink Floyd had become one of the biggest draws in popular music.

To judge from *The Wall*, though, fame has been a disaster. Pity the poor rock star. He is forced to stand "wild-eyed in the spotlight" while an audience gets to feel "the warm thrill of confusion." On both sides of the stage, people are gobbling pills and venting prejudice. It may seem like great fun. But it's really just another form of coercion—or so goes the conceit of this slightly hysterical album.

Its guiding metaphor is the wall. The wall represents many things. Compulsory socialization, for example. The masks men assume. Barriers to communication. The limits of being alone. Roger Waters, who wrote most of the words and music, expresses frustration at every turn. The libretto, which is apparently autobiographical, takes its protagonist from the womb to the stage, and then puts his life on trial. An unloving father abandons his family. A repressive mother dominates her helpless son. The rebellious child finds women suffocating. His music becomes a charade. He is compelled to degrade himself every night on stage. And so the wall grows. (During performances this past spring—held, as usual, in vast arenas—stage hands erected an oversize papier-mâché wall, brick by brick, between musicians and the audience.)

The only relief from this gloomy scenario comes in the music, a protean lot of skillful tricks, consisting of gently contoured melodies, sweet harmonies, and—the band's strong suit—atmospheric noodling. All spiced with sound effects, cavernous production, and large doses of plain old rock and roll. The sentiments may be sour, but the sound is, by turns, spacey, pretty, aggressive—and never less than titillating.

It has been a winning formula. For a spell, the number one single in America was "Another Brick in the Wall (Part II)." This somber ditty features an ominous chant, supplied in part by a choir of schoolboys: "We don't need no education/We don't need no thought control"—words intoned with the malicious zeal of cub scouts out for revenge. But this, in the first quarter of 1980, was the music America loved best.

Innocent escapism was not without its champions, however. Michael Jackson made a terrific album, *Off the Wall* (Epic),

Jim Miller on pop music

Migraine Heaven

Disco faded. The new wave flourished, fitfully. Punk clubs were a fad in Manhattan. Soul ballads made a comeback. So did Frank Sinatra, who produced his first album in five years, and his best singing in 15. The record industry, amid concern over the counterfeiting of tapes and albums, reported losses of \$208.7 million for 1979.

So went the past winter in pop music. For the most part, fluff accompanied the recession. Radio stations played song after song by the likes of Kenny Rogers and Barry Manilow—crooners in a format the trade dubs "AC," for "Adult Contemporary." Hard rock, by contrast,

had a rough time. As one power broker put it, disparaging the chances of a new single, "It's a rock and roll record in an AC world!"

The hit album of the season—and something of a surprise at that—was nonetheless a rock and roll record, *The Wall*, an operetta produced by the British band Pink Floyd (for Columbia). This group first won attention by playing acid rock, the kind with dazzling sonics and druggy lyrics, mostly about gnomes, elves, and trips to outer space. In the decade since the decline of LSD, the band has shown remarkable

that spawned four hit singles and became one of the season's staples in the top 10. He coincidentally provided some counterpoint to Pink Floyd: as the upbeat title tune put it, "Life ain't so bad at all/If you live it off the wall."

Though he has been sealed up in the bubble of show business for over a decade, ever since the Jackson Five's "I Want You Back" made him a celebrity at age 10, Michael Jackson is scarcely cursing his fate in his latest album. He is too busy enjoying his role. He sings with the abandon of a man who feels alive only on stage. He is unabashed about wishing to entertain, perhaps because he knows that it is the one thing he is exceptionally good at. (This, despite Roger Waters, is not a skill that requires an apology.)

Over the years, Jackson's voice has deepened without losing its boyish energy. He phrases with delicacy, sings ballads with a feather touch. But his forte remains timing. On the dance tracks, he bobs with the beat, using his voice as an effortless counterweight. And as *Off the Wall* repeatedly proves, on songs like "Rock With You" and "Don't Stop Til You Get Enough," there has not been a finer falsetto in black music since Smokey Robinson in his prime.

The talk among critics, however, concerned neither black music nor Pink Floyd. Above all, it concerned the Clash,

who released their third album, *London Calling* (Epic).

The Clash, it may be recalled, were, besides the Sex Pistols, the archetypal exponents of British punk (see *TNR*, March 24, 1979). When the Pistols dissolved at the end of their abortive American tour in 1978, the Clash were left alone to carry the news. Faced with the flagging momentum of punk at home, the band set out to do what every normal rock and roll band wants to do: conquer the United States, the home of the music, and its biggest market.

That ambition meant changes. However exciting the band's early work, their records were deemed too crude for most American ears. They never had won the air play essential for selling records here. The band thus faced a dilemma. They needed a product that would offend neither their hard core of followers nor the conservative businessmen who program radio stations. Their gambit was simple but brilliant. They would cast themselves as a latter-day Rolling Stones, make an accomplished album of hard rock, and invite the press to continue praising them, not simply as revolutionary artists, but also as uncompromising heirs to the vital currents in mainstream rock. Punk, rather than being a radical breaking point, would then become the capstone of rock and roll history.

London Calling is an album with something to prove. The tone is set by the cover, an allusion to the cover of Elvis Presley's first album. Both covers feature the performer's name in bold pink and green lettering beside a grainy black and white photo. With Elvis, we see a face-forward shot of the singer in concert. With the Clash, we also get a concert shot, but this time of a guitarist, back to the camera, poised to demolish his instrument. Thus a tradition renews itself.

The music is studiously offhand, with most of the tracks recorded live, their rough edges intact but tempered, toned down by a new attention to nuance. The repertoire is varied, showing off the band's roots. There is some reggae, some rockabilly, a New Orleans shuffle, some jump blues, a few memories of punk. There are lyrics about Montgomery Clift, the Spanish Civil War, the contradictions of playing "Revolution Rock" (the actual title of the song) before bored crowds out for good times.

Though Joe Strummer's toothless brawl has all the piquancy of a bully squalling at a mob, the playing is

spirited, and the spirit is, as they say, authentic. In other words, *London Calling* is a committed album of hard rock, some of it original, much of it derivative, all of it more or less competently executed by a band hungry for prestige. As hoped, it's become their best-selling album to date, crawling into the top 20 for several weeks.

But a masterpiece? The best record in a decade? The world's greatest rock and roll band? The music belies the hyperbole.

It has become obvious that many of the most interesting developments in rock are no longer likely to reach many people. The implications are not yet clear. This, after all, is a music normally aimed at mass media and mass markets. Much of its interest derives from the nature of a performer's relation to a large audience. In popular culture, the sheer weight of numbers carries a certain authority. Because millions of people crave Pink Floyd, what they have to say becomes symptomatic rather than soporific.

But what about the work of an experimental band? What about a performer ready to make esoteric music for a relatively small audience?

Such questions are raised by two new albums that challenge received ideas about the links between rock and roll and popular culture: *Second Edition* by Public Image Ltd. (Island), and *Entertainment!* by the Gang of Four (EMI import, slated for US release on Warner Brothers).

The two bands have much in common. Both are white British groups that exploit black American rhythms; both welcome dissonance and employ abrasive sonorities; and both sing discomfiting lyrics about the nightmares and petty oppressions of everyday life.

As it happens, their ironies intersect. For both bands, the prevailing view of paradise is a boring political hoax, of value mainly to the powerful, for tranquilizing the discontent of others. The Gang of Four put it this way: "Dream of the perfect life/This heaven gives me migraine/The problem of leisure/What to do for pleasure." And thus Public Image Ltd.: "This could be heaven/Shallow spread of ordered lawns/I like the illusion/Illusion of privacy."

Public Image has direct ties to punk. The band's guitarist and synthesizer player is Keith Levene, an early cohort of the Clash. And the lead singer is John Lydon, a.k.a. Johnnie Rotten. In his

Albums Worth Hearing

Elvis Costello and the Attractions, *Get Happy!!* (Columbia): a claustrophobic collection of 20 songs, mostly about failed love, filled with rage, regret, sometimes even remorse, played powerfully and sung with ferocious intensity, in the fashion of mid-1960s soul.

The Pretenders (Sire): an extraordinary debut by a British band of new wave neoclassicists (echoes of the Byrds, Kinks, and Blondie), led by Chrissie Hynde—a cool customer with a hard quiver of a voice.

Professor Longhair, *Crawfish Fiesta* (Alligator): the last and best album by the man who taught Fats Domino, Huey Smith, and Allen Toussaint how to play piano, but kept the secret of his phenomenal touch all to himself—the master of a tradition in New Orleans rhythm and blues.

previous incarnation with the Sex Pistols, Lydon set out to spark a pop holocaust. With Public Image, by contrast, he seems content simply to observe the end from a distance. (One of his most chilling new songs, "Swan Lake," is in fact about watching someone die.)

The band plays a harsh sort of trance music, filled with repetitions and clouds of sound, but with little of the bludgeoning volume or racing tempos that characterized early punk. Typical is "Albatross." For 10 minutes the song circles methodically around the unpromising line "I know you very well/You are unbearable." Squealing and jabbering and moaning at the top of his range, Lydon sounds like a man turned inside out. While the rhythm section pushes a disco drone, the guitar rings out grating splays of notes in recurring figures.

Other tracks are more seductive. The bass and drums sometimes unfurl sensuous patterns, played with hypnotic grace. But Lydon's voice is something else again. Invariably, it cuts to the quick. He is an utterly remarkable stylist. A model of unnatural contortions, his singing swoops, rattles, strangles on itself. The synthesizer and echo and pulse merely embalm his shrieks in a bath of sanitized glamor: shrink-wrapped pain.

There is something oddly compelling about this album. Since I first heard it, I've scarcely stopped playing it, perhaps because the music manages to be simultaneously erotic and repulsive, an uncanny combination. One thing is certain. With the possible exception of two albums made 10 years ago by John Cale and Nico, and few cuts by Pere Ubu, there has never been anything quite like it before in rock and roll.

The Gang of Four are by contrast refined aesthetes, cerebral guerrillas in revolt against the colonization of culture, whether by capitalists or Marxist hacks or conventional popular musicians. A list of mentors might include Roland Barthes and the Talking Heads, Antonio Gramsci, and James Brown. On *Entertainment!* they impugn, among other things, male domination, militarism, and the illusion of status, sometimes all at once: "The worst thing in 1954 was the Bikini/See the girl on the TV dressed in a Bikini/She doesn't think so but she's dressed for the H-bomb."

The stance is cheerfully at odds with Proletkult and the older canons of socialist taste; it avoids the violence

made heroic by the Clash, the humorless slogans recycled by so many left-wing folk singers. The Gang of Four rummage instead through the trash bins of urban life, collecting stereotypes and truisms, scrambling them out of order and then welding them back into a collage that jars our expectations, often to absurd effect. Taking as a motif the saw-tooth meters of a funk band, they play hard-edge body music, drained of kick or forward momentum. The lyrics are laconic, sung with hoarse dispassion, as if to parody a disjointed script, slogans from an ad company, or a report of disaster on the evening news.

The results are not immediately striking. On first playing, the album sounds like a flat-footed collation of punk and funk clichés. A skittering guitar and a stiff-armed beat establish a field of tension that is just barely danceable. But on a song like "Contract," the gaps in the rhythm and the faceless singing transfer attention to the lyrics, which are, in part, about the disenchantments of monogamy ("Is this so private/Our struggle in the bedroom?"), and, in part, about the fraud of unequal exchange ("Is this really the way it is?/Is this really a contract in our mutual interest?"). The starkness of the music points to a plain politics. Pose questions, don't strike poses. Expose contradictions. For the Gang of Four

such concerns are overriding.

In comparison with the run of modern rock and roll, this may seem like pretty bleak fare. Sometimes it is. Yet there are many things I admire about the music played by both the Gang of Four and Public Image. One is the very bluntness with which they confront the listener. Another is the austere integrity of their sound. With Public Image Ltd., there is a needling sense of passion, however inchoate or unattractive some of the sentiments may be. And with the Gang of Four, there's an almost unprecedented air of political seriousness, though the band's wit rescues it from soap-box solemnity.

What all this has to do with rock as a popular music is a more difficult question. In interviews, John Lydon has repeatedly gone out of his way to denounce "fucking, cheap, shoddy rock'n'rollers"—as if Public Image, Ltd., were something else entirely. Certainly neither Public Image nor the Gang of Four wish to supply ordinary entertainment; both aim to subvert the expectations of an audience raised on rituals of revolt and fantasies of erotic conquest. It is nevertheless one measure of rock in the wake of punk that bands like this can somehow work within and against the medium to make their own kind of music. In the process, the boundaries of rock are being redrawn.

The Tale Bearers by V. S. Pritchett

(Random House; \$10)

In several different ways, V. S. Pritchett, as a writer, draws our attention to the phenomenon of age. "It has often been said," he observes in an essay on E. M. Forster in *The Tale Bearers*, "that the British venerate old age." One hears the note of skepticism in that remark, but Pritchett suggests that the British cult, such as it is, may be a Victorian legacy, since "the Victorians solemnly sought to get over youth as quickly as possible and assume elderly airs"; and he draws a contrast with France, where, he says, "old age is often publicly derided." In this country, one is tempted to add, we tend to be uncomfortable with old age, and prefer to isolate it for scientific and sociological inspection; we seem divided, as a nation, between child-worshippers

and gerontologists. I think the British are in the right of it. Almost the only thing I *don't* have against Ronald Reagan, as a presidential candidate, is his age; the evidence is not encouraging, but it is just possible that this easygoing mediocrity may have gained a measure of wisdom about practical affairs in the course of his nearly three score years and ten.

In his own case, though, Pritchett has acknowledged an odd psychological pressure as the years advance. He began *Midnight Oil*, the second of his two superb autobiographical volumes, with these words:

This is the year of my seventieth birthday, a fact that bewilders me. . . . I understand now the look of affront I often saw in my father's face after this age and



V.S. Pritchett by Jack Coughlin

that I see in the faces of my contemporaries. We are affronted because, whatever we may feel, time has turned us into curiosities in some secondhand shop.

That was written in 1970, and Sir Victor—he was knighted a couple of years ago for his literary accomplishments—is now in the year of his 80th birthday. He may be something of a miracle, but he is hardly a curiosity. It would be impertinent to say that he is still going strong. He is, quite simply, flourishing; as always.

It has been quite an “always.” Over the decades, Pritchett has produced five novels, including the classic *Mr. Beluncle* at mid-career; and half a dozen collections of short stories—a form in which, according to the expert opinion of Elizabeth Bowen, he is “the most important English practitioner.” He has few peers as a travel writer, and largely because he shares the quality that, in talking about *The American Scene*, he attributes to Henry James: in whatever place he finds himself, Pritchett is always on the lookout for the story in it. *The Spanish Temper* challenges the best work of its kind in English, and Pritchett

also has written about the cities of Dublin, London, and New York. (The book on Manhattan bears the title *New York Proclaimed*; what New York does, Pritchett has said, is to proclaim itself, and he is so right.) Then he has given us two fairly recent biographies of Balzac and Turgenev, and counting the present collection, some eight volumes of essays in literary criticism. Pritchett writes faster than I can read. Even as I made my way through *The Tale Bearers*, I noticed that Pritchett was appearing almost weekly, with new long literary essays of the same unfailingly high order, in the *New Yorker* or the *New York Review of Books*.

Interestingly enough, Pritchett has never, so far as I know, written poetry for publication, and he avoids writing about poetry or the lives of poets. One reason may be that in his time, our time, the discussion of poetry has fallen chiefly into the hands of academic critics—a breed for which, I have to say wincingly, Pritchett reserves his rare expressions of scorn. Speaking of Max Beerbohm in *The Tale Bearers*, he confesses in an aside to a fear of “what would happen to Max if he were put through the American academic

machine. There seems to be a convention that this machine must begin by stunning its victim with the obvious.” As to the new American critics, the structuralists, Pritchett has been heard to say that they are really engineers rather than readers of literature. Warming to this theme in *The Myth Makers*, published last year, in a review of Victor Brombert’s study of Flaubert—a book for which Pritchett otherwise voiced considerable admiration—he deplored “the present academic habit,” therein exemplified, “of turning literary criticism into technology.” The duty of the critic, he went on, “is to literature, not to its surrogates”—meaning, by the latter, modes of philosophy, psychology, and science. “Literary criticism,” he concluded, “does not add to its status by opening an intellectual hardware store.”

As a critic, V. S. Pritchett seems to inhabit, not a hardware store, but some sort of open-air pavilion, with the myriad books protected by a roof and the sounds of the human world flowing in freely and bracingly. He can, of course, be an astute close analyst of prose style when he wants to be. In the course of a piece on Saul Bellow, whom he engagingly credits with having “the most effusive intelligence of living American novelists,” Pritchett quotes a passage from *Humboldt’s Gift*:

A wonderful talker, a hectic non-stop monologist and improvisator, a champion detractor: to be loused up by Humboldt was really a kind of privilege. It was like being the subject of a two-nosed portrait by Picasso, or an eviscerated chicken by Soutine.

“One recognizes the voice at once,” Pritchett comments; “it has the dash, the dandyism, the easy control of side-slipping metaphor and culture-freaking which gives pace to Saul Bellow’s comedies.” And in that critical comment, in turn, one recognizes Pritchett’s own comic spirit; one sees and hears the broadening smile, the little chuckles, the sudden burst of laughter that so frequently accompany his literary or personal pronouncements. As imaginative writer, as critic, as autobiographer, Pritchett is a lover of the comic. How he relishes the recorded moment when Oscar Wilde asked a lady whether Max Beerbohm ever took off his face and revealed his mask!

The Tale Bearers is a companion volume to *The Myth Makers*. The latter collection dealt entirely with non-English-language prose writers, Pritchett showing himself at home and at ease with an astounding range of individual writers,

bodies of work, national cultures, and literary ages: from Pushkin to Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn in Russia; from George Sand to Jean Genet in France; Kafka and Strindberg; and an assortment of Latin American writers, among them Borges and Gabriel García Márquez. In *The Tale Bearers*, the subjects are mainly British and American—an exception being Lady Murasaki's medieval Japanese *The Tale of Genji*, which, however, Pritchett treats by comparing the English renderings of that extraordinary novel by Arthur Waley (half a century ago) and by the American scholar Edward G. Seidensticker (1976).

More often than not, the occasion for discourse is a new biography: of Rider Haggard—Pritchett did not read Haggard during his lost childhood and was nearly 60 before he took his "first plunge into the choking verbiage of *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*"; of Kipling, Conrad, T. E. Lawrence, Forster; and in a section called "Characters," of Jonathan Swift, Richard Burton, Frederick Rolfe. Pritchett is never better than when he is considering a writer's life and his writings in offbeat association with each other. At other times Pritchett examines new fiction by Graham Greene, Saul Bellow, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, and others; and there are some texts revisited, like Henry Green's first novel, *Blindness*, reissued in 1977, and Edmund Wilson's *To The Finland Station*.

Pritchett's gift for the luminous, often witty, summary remark serves him handsomely as he covers these large stretches of literary ground. To the examples already offered, let me add his perception that in *To The Finland Station* Edmund Wilson performed as a critic "in whom history is broken up into minds." Wilson, he continues, is an artist "in the sense that he is a man possessed. Give him the subject and it fuses with his whole person as if something like Mesmer's famous magnetic fluid had flowed into him." Pritchett's well-modulated prose is a constant pleasure; it is never self-admiring and never out of keeping with its subject. In *Midnight Oil* Pritchett quotes some heady youthful stuff he wrote on a mountain in Tennessee, where he was responding to the unaccustomed scenery and listening to the local vernacular. "What," he asks with amused dismay, "can be the origin and meaning of those bizarre lyrical outbursts, those classy metaphors and finicking adjectives. . . . I had come out in a rash." There is no evidence of rash, of the faintest rise in temperature, in the

unforced style of *The Tale Bearers*.

I would be the last to harness Pritchett with anything like a "theory" of literature, theories being what he is most wary of when it comes to literary talk. But he does have developed views about the varieties of literary personality, about the sources of personality and the ways it can get articulated in language and narrative theme. And he has long indicated a homegrown distinction—it strikes me as Pritchettesque rather than Freudian, though Freud contributed to it—between writers of a pre-puberty and those of a post-puberty imagination (as he once put it, between Whitman and Shakespeare). The former species is at least as fascinating to him as its opposite. About Kipling, for whom Pritchett has always declared a profound and somewhat unfashionable respect, he says—mark the words—that:

His lasting attraction as a writer is his gift of conveying the magical. It springs from his childhood in Bombay and Lahore, and he never lost it entirely. . . . Kipling worshipped children, and easily and seriously abandoned himself to their private minds. . . . He saw childhood as the sacred age out of which it was painful and shocking to grow.

And more harshly, about Swift: "Swift is an instance of the infantilism of genius;

he was a self-regarding child-egotist all his life." For this connoisseur of the ages of man, needless to say, mature writers like Conrad and Graham Greene likewise disclose their odd obsessions and winning peculiarities.

It is possible to cavil at Pritchett, though one does so with an apologetic smile. He is perhaps too generous with his superlatives. In reviewing novels, he quotes at too great length for my taste (this was a minor flaw in his book on Turgenev). He skids momentarily in identifying Henry James as a Bostonian, indeed as "a Boston snob"; the author of *The Bostonians* could not have been anything but what he was, a New Yorker born and bred. In trying to cope with the weird mix of Catholicism and the American deep south in Flannery O'Connor, Pritchett is uncharacteristically turgid. But he occupies today a nearly solitary position as a literary critic in the great tradition—standing between literature and human society to greet the books as they come, passing the word back and forth.

R. W. B. Lewis

R. W. B. Lewis, Neil Gray Professor of Rhetoric at Yale, is the author of *Edith Wharton: A Biography* (Harper & Row).

A Giacometti Portrait by James Lord

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; \$10.95, \$7.95 paper)

This beautiful little book was published originally by the Museum of Modern Art in New York and after a time was allowed to go out of print. For many years it has been impossible to find. Though there is no reason to disbelieve a word of it, it is best read as a short comic novel with two characters—an artist at the height of his powers and reputation who sometimes sits hunched over, his head and hands hanging toward the floor, thinking of suicide, and an American, somewhat younger, from a well-to-do family in Englewood, New Jersey. The artist has agreed to do a portrait of him. It is to be a quick portrait sketch on canvas that will take an afternoon at most. They have known each other for a long time and the

American has written several articles about the artist, who lives and works in four rooms looking out on an open passageway in what has been described as one of the sadder parts of Paris.

On a Saturday in September, the year unspecified, James Lord arrived at the studio of Alberto Giacometti. He found Giacometti sitting by the telephone staring at the floor. Nearly an hour passed, during which he worked on various pieces of unfinished sculpture. Muttering irritably, he then inspected every single one of the 15 or 20 paintings stacked against the walls. Finally he put a fresh canvas on the easel, poured turpentine into a little dish until it overflowed onto the floor, and picked up his palette and a bunch of brushes. As he

worked he looked at Lord constantly and also at everything around him. After a couple of hours he said, "That's enough." He had completed the drawing of the figure and sketched in the background—a tall stool on the left, a pot-bellied stove on the right—and entirely painted in the face in black and gray. He moved away from the canvas to study it and then said, "It's a beginning, at least."

"A beginning?" Lord asked. "But I thought we were going to work only once."

"It's too late for that now," Giacometti said. "It's gone too far and at the same time not far enough. We can't stop now."

So Lord agreed to pose on Monday, and they went to a neighborhood cafe, where Giacometti ate his ritual lunch: two hard-boiled eggs, two slices of cold ham with a piece of bread, two glasses of Beaujolais, and two large cups of coffee. "If I could just do a head, one head, just once," Giacometti said,

then maybe I'd have a chance to paint a portrait. Ingres could do it. He could finish a portrait. It was a substitute for a photograph and had to be done by hand because there was no other way of doing it then. But now that has no meaning.

Lord said what about Picasso's portraits and Giacometti said, "I hate them. They're vulgar."

"But if you had to say which period of Picasso's you like best, which would it be?"

"None."

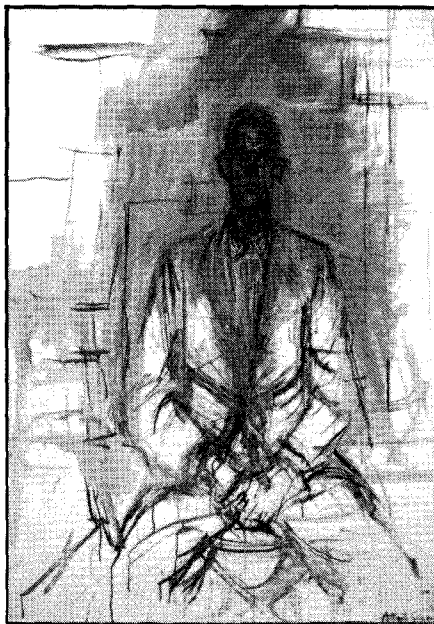
Lord remarked that Cézanne had painted some pretty good portraits. "But he never finished them," Giacometti said.

After Vollard had posed a hundred times the most Cézanne could say was that the shirt front wasn't too bad. He was right. It's the best part of the picture. Cézanne never really finished anything. He went as far as he could, then abandoned the job. That's the terrible thing: the more one works on a picture, the more impossible it becomes to finish it.

Giacometti preferred to talk as he painted. They both talked about all sorts of things: about Giacometti's trip to London, about how far away from the model van Eyck was when he painted the portrait in the National Gallery of a man wearing a red turban, about neuroses, about self-destruction. "The terrible thing about dying," Giacometti said, "is that you can only do it once. I've been rather attracted by the idea of being hanged. A beautiful strong rope around the neck."

By the end of the second sitting the head had become more elongated and vaguer than the day before, and was criss-crossed by black and gray lines and surrounded by a halo of undefined space. "There has been some progress," Giacometti said, "but we have to go further. We'll work tomorrow, won't we?"

At the third sitting, as he began to paint he said, "I've noticed that not only do you look like a brute full face but your profile is a little degenerate. Full face you go to jail and in profile you go to the asylum." They both laughed. The afternoon passed slowly. Giacometti said, "I've been wasting my time for thirty years. The root of the nose is more than I



painting of James Lord by Alberto Giacometti

can hope to manage." Sometimes he said, "You've moved. Raise your head a little. . . . No, no, you were all right before. Lower it again."

The next day he said, "I'm not as tired today but I'm in a foul humor. I think I'll give up painting for good. . . . I simply can't seem to reproduce what I see." Presently he murmured, "There. The nose is in place now. That's some progress." And a few minutes later: "I know where I'm going now. I see how I can advance things a bit."

Lord, who had to get back to New York and already had changed his reservation twice, agreed to sit for another week. In the evenings, or sometimes on the spot when he was left alone for a minute, he made notes, which became the basis of this book: what Giacometti said, what happened that day in the studio. Each afternoon before the sitting began, Lord would take the canvas out into the passageway and photograph it. Giacometti had been

exceedingly generous to him in the past and he had never been able to demonstrate his esteem and affection in a tangible way. Now at last, miraculously, just by sitting still, he was contributing something that was useful to Giacometti in his work. It was an un hoped-for satisfaction. When he tried to tell Giacometti this, he wouldn't listen. Presently he started gasping aloud and stamping his foot. "Your head's going away!" he exclaimed. "It's going away completely."

"It will come back," Lord said.

"Not necessarily. Maybe the canvas will become completely empty. And then what will become of me? I'll die of it!" Giacometti pulled his handkerchief out of his pocket and stared at it and with a moan threw it on the floor. Then he shouted, "I shriek! I scream!"

The next day, when the painting continued to go badly, Lord finally said, "Why don't we stop for the day? Shall I stand up?" and Giacometti said, "Yes, and put me out of my misery. . . . Don't move! I was only joking."

It began to get dark and again Lord suggested that they stop. After a while Giacometti's brother Diego came into the studio and said, "What are you doing?"

"I'm working," Giacometti said.

Diego laughed. "It's dark," he said. "You can't see a damn thing." When the lights were turned on they revealed that half the afternoon's work had disappeared into a gray vagueness.

Two days later, standing in the street with Lord and looking at the acacias, Giacometti remarked, "One should be a tree."

The sittings continued. The face on the canvas came in and out of focus. "Merde!" Giacometti cried. "You don't look at all the way you did before." And then, after a little while, "I'm destroying everything with great bravery." That day the sitting again went on until the light failed and Lord could no longer see the features of Giacometti's face, wreathed in cigarette smoke. "I like working in the dark," Giacometti said. He was not pleased, even so, with what he had done. When Lord was allowed to look he saw that the head seemed to be inside a small cage of lines. He said, "There has been some progress, though, hasn't there?"

"Oh yes. There is always some progress," Giacometti said, "even when things are at their worst, because then you don't have to do over again all the negative things you have already done."

Privately, to Giacometti's wife, Lord

said, "But it could go on for months," and she answered, "Sometimes it does."

On the 18th day, when the portrait had passed through one transformation after another and had arrived at a state that was suddenly superb, Lord persuaded Giacometti to stop. They stood and looked at the canvas in the studio and then out in the passageway, from a greater distance. "Well," Giacometti said, "we've gone far. We could have gone further still, but we have gone far. It's only the beginning of what it could be. But that's something, anyway." Lord said that he thought it was admirable. "That's another matter," Giacometti said.

At the beginning of each chapter there is a photograph of the portrait in its various stages. The other portrait—Lord's of Giacometti—never goes out of focus or collapses into a gray vagueness or is anything but admirable. If there is a more endearing study of the artist as maniac, as child, as intelligence, as driven haunted slave, or selfless master, as who knows which of the nine orders of angels, I have not encountered it.

William Maxwell

William Maxwell is the author of So Long, See You Tomorrow (Knopf).

brother's administration. In an oral report for the Kennedy Library, Robert complained that Wofford seemed to put "a group of Negroes or a group of those who were interested in civil rights" above the "best interests of President Kennedy."

It would be easy to dismiss Wofford's book as sour grapes. After putting together Senator Kennedy's speeches as a book to impress liberals, Wofford was invited to join the Senate speech-writing staff. When Wofford said he had a prior commitment to Father Theodore Hesburgh, with whom he had worked on civil rights projects, Theodore Sorensen advised him to get on board early if he wanted to go places with the Kennedys. Later, sure enough, when Wofford did join the administration, Richard Goodwin was in the niche Sorensen first offered him. But Sorensen still was friendly enough to give this Machiavellian advice: don't get too closely associated with Sargent Shriver, who was known as "the Communist" to real Kennedys and their hangers-on.

Wofford cast his lot with Shriver, and resented the countless Kennedy slights Shriver never responded to. Both

Of Kennedys and Kings: Making Sense of the Sixties by Harris Wofford

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; \$17.50)

This strange defense of the New Frontier reads more like an attack—and many of Camelot's dreamier types no doubt will receive it as one. Which prompts a repetition of Franklin Roosevelt's complaint about businessmen—that after the New Deal rescued them from drowning, they spent the rest of their lives trying to lynch the lifeguard. Wofford speaks for the people who made John Kennedy's real contribution, even while the president himself was seeking fame with moon shots and Green Berets.

Wofford saw, and was exasperated by, the obtuse side of the Kennedys. But he only had a chance to see it because his own neglected heroes—Chester Bowles, Adlai Stevenson, Sargent Shriver, Bill Moyers, Theodore Hesburgh—were given a welcome, however grudging, in the Kennedy entourage. That openness almost compensated, time after time, for the Kennedy crudity and even savagery.

Item: When Robert Kennedy invited Green Beret counterinsurgency teams to show off their tree-climbing acrobatics at Hyannis Port, Sargent Shriver had to oppose his wife Eunice's enthusiasm for letting their children watch the military show.

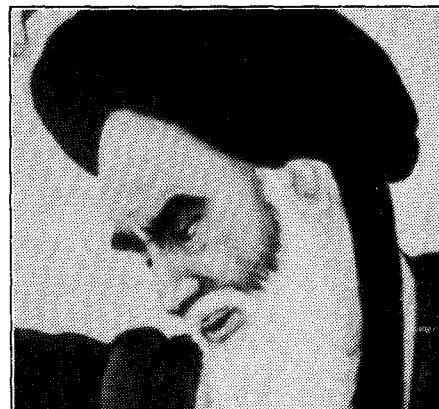
Item: When Wofford and Shriver brought the first Peace Corps contingent around to the White House for a send-off, the two were stunned when Kennedy matter-of-factly asked if all the

team's blacks had been trained at Howard University. It was the president's natural assumption that those hoping to break down racial barriers abroad would start by observing them at home.

Item: When his administration tried to prevent insults to black ambassadors who drove from New York to Washington, Kennedy proposed this solution to chief of protocol Angier Biddle Duke: "Can't you tell those African ambassadors not to drive on Route 40? It's a hell of a road—I used to drive it years ago, but why would anyone want to drive it today when you can fly? Tell those ambassadors I wouldn't think of driving from New York to Washington. Tell them to fly!"

Item: When Wofford was Kennedy's civil rights adviser during the Freedom Rides of 1961, the president called and said, "Get your friends off those buses!" Robert Kennedy followed up with this horrifying disclosure about the Freedom Riders: "I wonder if they have the best interest of their country at heart. Do you know that one of them is against the atom bomb—yes, he even picketed against it in jail. The president is going abroad, and this is all embarrassing to him."

The easy transition from national interest to presidential freedom from embarrassment was typical of Robert Kennedy's priorities throughout his



Franz Brunner, Tages Anzeiger, Zurich

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men found Lyndon Johnson far more interested in civil rights, during his vice-presidential years, than was the president himself. Johnson also cooperated in funding another Shriver-Wofford project, the Peace Corps. In fact the thing about Wofford's book that may bother Kennedy people most is his claim that Johnson was an unsung hero of Camelot, though he had been cast by its lead players as the villain.

It is from such paradoxes that Wofford's book weaves a story less self-serving than may at first appear. The Kennedys took Johnson, against their own preference and their pledges to many liberal followers, because it was good politics to do so. The same reasoning forced both Kennedys late and reluctantly toward civil rights support. It was not their better natures, but their political judgment, that could be called on with success.

Yet Wofford does not blink the failure of their better natures where political judgment did not check them. As a friend and champion of his earlier supporter, Chester Bowles, Wofford recreates the atmosphere of the Bay of Pigs time, when Robert Kennedy called Bowles "a gutless bastard," and Pierre Salinger told Wofford "We're going to get him!" for being such a "yellow-bellied friend of yours." Wofford makes it plain that Sorensen and Schlesinger have considerably whitewashed the Kennedy eagerness to try out military force on Castro. This was no mere plan taken on trust from Eisenhower. Kennedy wanted to hear no contrary advice. He read Senator Fulbright's memo against the invasion on Air Force One, with Fulbright sitting beside him, and deigned to make no comment—or to invite any. His attitude toward critics was summed up in words to Sorensen before the attack: "I know everybody is grabbing their nuts on this." After the failure of the invasion, which is supposed to have taught Kennedy so much, Maxwell Taylor of all people was put in charge of evaluating it; the president said "I should have put Bobby at the head of the CIA instead of the Justice Department"; and Bobby began plotting Castro's death in revenge for the president's embarrassment.

Dissident though he is on some things, Wofford generally accepts the myth that the missile crisis reflected a new maturity, some lessons learned from earlier failure. But he has Operation Mongoose information from the Church Committee to show that the Kennedys remained obsessed with

Castro as a walking affront to their manhood. They felt that the Green Beret types they had hero-worshipped were snickering behind their backs at Kennedy's courage. "Like learning that Superman is a fag," said one CIA man of Kennedy's "failure of nerve" at the Bay of Pigs.

Wofford was a protégé of the doves in this period. He speaks for them, and for his own Gandhian studies, which brought him into the civil rights movement as a spokesman for nonviolence. His views were not any Kennedy's, nor were they given kind treatment in Kennedy's administration. But the wonder is that they could be voiced there at all. And Wofford does not underestimate the importance of that openness, which he found growing in Robert Kennedy as the latter approached his death. There are no saints or sinners in this book. Stevenson and Bowles, Dr. King and Bill Moyers, all have their flaws—like Lyndon Johnson, whom Wofford opposed at first. Things went wrong with the Peace Corps and the War on Poverty. Good intentions were never enough, any more than hard politics was. Wofford claims that he is arguing for a partial restoration of the New Frontier's reputation, after all the revisionist talk of its arrogance and ignorance; and he is right.

The best thing in his book is the treatment of Robert Kennedy's tragedy—caught with a knowledge he could not let the nation come to, that Kennedy had been trying to assassinate Castro, just as he himself was assassinated. Wofford believes that this dark, incommunicable knowledge shook all the Kennedy belief in one's own righteous tough freedom of action. He thinks that Robert held back from the 1968 cam-

paign for fear that in that election Lyndon Johnson would use the knowledge he kept hinting at when he said the Kennedys had run "a damn Murder Inc. in the Caribbean." It is a convincing portrait, and it suggests a real lesson the Kennedys may teach us after all. For it was not only Robert Kennedy who needed sobering up after a spree of amoral scheming based on the assumption that America is right no matter what it does. The American mission in the postwar world was both too grandiose and (because of that) too reckless about means, too desperate to succeed at any cost. Many feel even now that the way to restore the country to prosperity and confidence is to revive that mission in all its scope, its solipsistic belief that America alone should decide the fate of all other nations.

Wofford convinces me that Robert Kennedy, who shared that vision in its most fanatic form, came at last to know how evil and self-defeating it is. He knew by the end that his country's real good demanded the embarrassment of his president, the discrediting of many of our leaders and their aims. That is not a pleasant kind of knowledge to carry about with one; and the sag of Robert Kennedy's shoulders toward the end was more eloquent of that fact than were any bits of Aeschylus he cribbed from Edith Hamilton. There is a Kennedy legacy, after all—to destroy the Kennedy myths. Robert Kennedy died before he could face the entirety of that truth. But let us begin.

Garry Wills

Garry Wills is the Luce Professor of American Culture and Public Policy at Northwestern University.

The Harder They Come by Michael Thelwell

(Grove Press; \$12.50)

In Jamaica during the late 1940s, a gunman named Rhygin (born Ivanhoe Martin) made a brief and stunning appearance in the local news. When Jamaicans picked up their *Gleaner* one morning, they read of the first great shoot-out in the island's history—Rhygin, who had been lured into a police ambush, had shot his way out, leaving

four or five of the constables dead. There were to be other deaths in succeeding days and weeks, as Rhygin, eluding the best efforts of the law to capture him, sought out and gunned down selected enemies—persons he deemed to have wronged him. Though the mere idea of Rhygin was terrifying in the extreme, Jamaicans were fasci-

nated as well, for nothing like him had yet showed up in the annals of local crime. The novelty he represented was that of being a two-gun desperado—in Wild West, American movie fashion. He operated out of the dreadful west Kingston slums, wore a version of cowboy outfit, and, instead of riding a horse—as no such creature was to be found in the hardscrabble ghetto—he made his daring getaways on a bicycle. On another morning, there was Rhygin himself on the front page of the *Gleaner*, brandishing his six-guns and, from the expression on his face, enjoying the audacious attitude he struck for the camera. He had had the picture taken in one of his hideouts, and had sent it in to the paper, asking that it be published. Not long after, Rhygin's sensational passage came to an end, when he was trapped and cut down in a hail of police rifle-fire. But by then he had become an ingredient of local folklore. What a figure!, as Jamaicans said, in reflecting upon their first Hollywood-style gunslinger. What could have produced him? From what source of inspiration or grievance had he sprung? Little or nothing was known of his earlier life. In which case, it is probably natural that, as he continued to haunt local thinking, he would in time become a subject of indigenous art. It was only in the realm of imagination that answers to the questions he aroused could be found, or plausibly suggested—answers that could also be used to cast some light upon the circumstances of Jamaican life that may have influenced the emergence of such a character.

The first major effort along these lines was made a few years ago in the form of a film, *The Harder They Come*, which has enjoyed a considerable vogue in sections of this country. Michael Thelwell, a Jamaican writer who teaches third world literature at the University of Massachusetts, has now, in a novel, made the second major attempt at imagining the origins and evolution of a Rhygin. His book carries the title of the film and uses a number of the incidents as well. But Thelwell's work—fully realized in its own right, in no way a "novelization" of the movie—essays a broader and deeper calculation of the social factors in the Jamaican setting which account for the failure of promise, the wrecking of ideals, and the deforming of talent.

In the novel, Rhygin (or Ivan), one of the representative products of peasant culture, springs from a small village of the mountainside. He grows up swim-

ming in streams and rivers; roaming the dense rural vegetation and shooting birds with a slingshot; raising goats, pigs, and chickens on his little family plot; seeing and learning the ways by which the poor survive economically and sustain themselves psychologically; listening to the smart sounds of Kingston that flow, by radio, into his remote village; joining in occult ceremonies that summon up the voices of dead ancestors; being tutored by his grandmother and her contemporaries in the wisdom of Old Testament and the civilities of folk culture. Early in Ivan's life, his schoolmates begin to call him Rhygin, for they have been struck by qualities of spunkiness and daring in his behavior. It is not a name that endears itself to his grandmother. She fears that it might have a mysterious influence upon his future. At her age, she has seen enough of the consequences of youthful bravado. She is also sufficiently prudish to abhor a certain meaning of the local term "rhygin": sexually provocative and aggressive. But Ivan feels unerringly chosen by the name. It confirms his own sense of gravid style and personality. From part of that sense he shapes the ambition to become a famous recording artist, a star of Jamaican music—for he also has been complimented on his voice, and he wishes to emulate the top singers of Kingston, whom he hears on the radio. But such an ambition is clearly beyond his reach in the village, and he knows where he must go to explore it. One day, "to follow me heart," he boards a bus for the big city.

Within a few hours of arriving in the poverty-ridden west Kingston ghetto, where he is to reside—and which is in horrid contrast to the scenic generousities of his rural landscapes—his suitcase is stolen and he is conned out of all his money. After a period of begging, stealing, sleeping in the outdoors, and being dismissed contemptuously by the Kingston well-to-do when he appeals to them for menial work, Ivan begins to find his urban bearings. A preacher gives him shelter. He befriends a group of young toughs, who have no visible means of income—or none that is legal—who fashion their personal styles from Hollywood Westerns and crime melodramas, and who smoke ganja (marijuana), dream "valiant dreams," and curse the rich and higher-ups. Each is called by the name of the movie star he admires the most—"Bogart," "Greenstreet," "Raft," "Lorre," "Wayne," "Cooper," "Widmark," "Cagney." When they leave the cinema, they reenact

dangerous episodes from movies they have seen, shielded by one of the immunities of life on the silver screen: the star seldom dies. In place of guns, they carry fierce-looking pocket knives, which they flash from time to time. But they do this simply to try and appropriate, or approximate, the styles of their heroes; for the drawing of blood is beneath their code of honor. Only "Bendix" has ever slashed a comrade—not yet having learned the difference "between art and murder." Ivan is fonder of the Westerns—*Bad Man's Territory*, *The Streets of Laredo*, *Gunfight at O.K. Corral*—than of the crime pictures. To him, the gangster flicks lack "the clean-cut heroism" of the Westerns. He doesn't wish, either, to adopt a name from the movies. He is too attached to the Rhygin he took with him from the countryside, the name that carries the fingerprint of his innermost character.

But his urban betrayals are by no means over. He is evicted from lodgings he has found with the clergyman, thanks to the jealousy of a fellow inmate. The song he has been writing and rehearsing in order to launch

All Honorable Men

**The Anti-War Movement
in Delaware
1965-1966**

*By Joseph Donald Craven,
former Attorney General
of Delaware*

ALL HONORABLE MEN is the history of the Peace Movement in Delaware in the 1960s. It is also the story of Delaware politics and politicians (all identified) and how these "Honorable Men" conspired to deny the people of Delaware the right to vote their convictions on the War. It could happen again!

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himself as a star of local music is finally recorded, and has all the marks of a popular hit. No one knows this better than the producer, who offers Ivan not a contract, with provisions for royalty, but a flat payment of \$50. When Ivan protests, the producer withdraws the record from circulation and forbids disc jockeys and juke-box operators to play it—thus ruining Ivan's most sustaining dream. Ivan then drifts into the socio-religious underworld of the Rastafarians, the Ethiopia-oriented cultists who live by ganja—whether smoking it or selling it—and who dissent radically from almost every form of Euro-Jamaican culture, which they call Babylon. Ivan joins the Rastafarians in supplying ganja to certain important middlemen. Here, too, as he finds, the rapacious powers of the city hold sway. He and his colleagues receive a mere pittance for what they supply, while the middlemen, with the connivance of the police, export the weed to America at great profit to themselves. When Ivan demands that he be paid at a fair rate, he becomes a marked man in the eyes of the police.

This further encounter with urban predation exhausts any desire he might still have had to make something worthy of himself. His position as victim has begun to seem as inescapable as that of the little birds of his countryside, which, while providing industriously for their own upkeep, are overpowered and devoured by the great hawks that rule the air. Enraged by the injustice of his circumstances, Ivan wholly surrenders to the irreverent bravado of his name Rhygin. He turns into a cowboy-gunman and embarks upon a campaign of killing, as though acts of lawlessness are the only means by which he is now able to affirm or recover his dignity.

In Thelwell's novel, Rhygin is the main figure in a larger portrait of Jamaica's peasant life—the character and position of the underclass, rural and urban; how it endures under the most demanding economic circumstances; and what often seems futile and illusory in its hopes for betterment. Almost all the characters in the book speak in local dialect, and it will take some time for American readers to attune their ears to the sound or to decipher aspects of meaning. But the narrative passages, marked by Thelwell's fine gifts as a prose stylist, will encourage and reward patient effort. As he said in an interview with *Publisher's Weekly*, "I knew it couldn't be in any other language. There was no way these folks could speak standard

English. But it's like 'Finnegans Wake': readers will learn a specialized language if they are interested in the culture."

His novel is the most authentic and evocative portrait of the Jamaican poor—the rich and sustaining vernaculars of their culture, the sheer heroism of their economic existence—that I have seen. I don't imagine that a work of this kind, of its particular subject matter and concerns, can be written more truthfully. Beyond the particularities of local reference, *The Harder They Come* may even be read as a metaphor for the circumstances in which the poorer elements of the black

world live—the Sisyphean nature of their uphill struggle against poverty. And beyond politics, Thelwell's novel may also be linked to that body of literature which records the search for self-achievement—what happens to many among the young when they light out from their obscure hometowns to develop, transform, and enact themselves in the major centers of style, culture, and possibility.

Jervis Anderson

Jervis Anderson, who was born in Jamaica, is a staff writer for the *New Yorker*.

Individual Rights in the Corporation

edited by Alan F. Westin and Stephan Salisbury

(Pantheon; \$16.95)

Constitutional rights don't apply during working hours. That always has been the general rule in the US. Under the Constitution, government may not abridge rights to free speech, assembly and association, and privacy. It must provide due process and equal protection of the laws, including rights to trial by a jury of one's peers, to be considered innocent until proved guilty, to be presented with detailed charges against one, and to be allowed to cross-examine one's accusers.

The private employer, in contrast, generally is not required to observe any of these rights. In most cases, employers can fire or discipline a worker without even giving a reason, much less defending it.

Labor unions, which historically have negotiated some restrictions on employers' prerogatives, are finding that other groups are showing interest in employee rights. Consumer and environmental activists seek protection for "whistleblowers." Women's groups want to stop sexual harassment of female workers. Some civil liberties lawyers and professors are expanding their traditional concerns to include the loss of employee rights which results from arbitrary and unjust deprivation of income or career opportunity.

Although they approach the problem from a variety of perspectives, these groups agree that people should be protected from corporate power in some

of the same ways and for some of the same reasons that they are shielded from state power by the Constitution.

If the sovereign state of Delaware is subject to the limitations of the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause, and thus cannot deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, . . . then why should not the 'corporate state' of DuPont or General Motors or United States Steel be similarly limited?

asks Professor Arthur S. Miller in *Individual Rights in the Corporation*.

This book's format as a "Reader on Employee Rights" makes it a particularly useful introduction to current debate on this subject. The collection of short excerpts from articles, books, and speeches accurately reflects the major interest groups and points of view. The book contains the right blend of opinion with facts on the history and current status of law in this area, presented clearly so that even non-lawyers will find it readily understandable. The writers include professors, lawyers, business executives, and workers who have been punished for insisting on constitutional rights. Four basic positions emerge from their statements.

The first is that it is simply not practical to bring civil liberties into the workplace because they would interfere with the real business at hand: productivity. Taking this argument to an extreme, economics professor Donald L.

was well written and funny and eerily accurate in portraying the sights and sounds of New Orleans. The second was even better. This great big fat and flatulent hero, Ignatius J. Reilly, a medievalist raging against the 20th century, was one of a kind. In his forward to the novel, handsomely published by Louisiana State University Press, Percy describes the hero as "without progenitor in any literature that I know of, slob extraordinary, a mad Oliver Hardy, a fat Don Quixote, a perverse Thomas Aquinas rolled into one."

Well, it's true. Ignatius J. Reilly especially reminds one of Don Quixote. His grand conception of the world, founded upon Boethius's *The Consolation of Philosophy*, strikes those around him as woefully out of touch with reality. The strivings of his contemporaries to achieve middle-class comfort—a TV, air conditioner, and stereo—are pitiful in Reilly's eyes. He would rather submit to the wheel of fortune. Sex, financial ambition, power, and fame—the engines driving the 20th-century American—all strike Reilly as the decadent desires of a spiritually destitute nation.

I mention the above not to characterize *A Confederacy of Dunces* as a medieval tract in disguise, pointing its finger at modern society. I mention it to alert readers to the richness of a novel which many may find merely hilarious. For it is, without question, one of the funniest books ever written. And by funny I don't mean merely witty. I mean that it will make you laugh out loud till your belly aches and your eyes water and you have to compose yourself so that you can read on without pain.

A Confederacy of Dunces begins with its hero in front of a New Orleans department store waiting for his mother. Standing there with his green hunting cap squeezed over his "fleshy balloon" of a head, his mountainous body testing the buttons on his flannel shirt, Ignatius J. Reilly is taken for a suspicious character and questioned by a local policeman. His haughty replies, bespeaking an elaborate education and a general distaste for the world, irritate the policeman, who attempts to arrest him. An old man standing by begins to denounce the officer as a "communiss"

and suddenly a band of shoppers chimes in with opinions. The hero's mother returns and in the ensuing confusion mother and son escape to a French Quarter bar called the "Night of Joy" while the old man gets arrested.

The author picks up both stories. Indeed, the form of the novel represents a triumph all its own. Characters run into each other with an excess of coincidence rather like a Hardy novel, but every thread of the tale is followed and resolved with clarity and comedy. The climactic scene brings almost all the characters together in a dramatic accident.

What cannot be described here, but ranks high among this book's many virtues, is the singular accomplishment of capturing the flavor of a city. New Orleans is unique among American cities; indeed in many ways it is scarcely American. Its speech, customs, geography, philosophy all are recorded with uncanny accuracy in this gem of a book. I urge you to read it.

Phelps Gay

Phelps Gay is a New Orleans lawyer and writer.

Correspondence, from page 3

fired plant produces some 36,500 truckloads of ash per year. If scrubbers are used to reduce air pollution by desulfurization, vast quantities of a soupy sludge are produced. According to Philip Abelson (editor of *Science*), if current Environmental Protection Agency standards "were met for new stationary sources, the national production of sludge would rise to 300 million tons a year." According to EPA head Russell Train there would be only 120 million tons of sludge per year. Even at the lower figure, 20 years' worth of wastes would cover 240,000 acres to a depth of four feet.

All that can really be said for coal is that, unlike oil, sufficient domestic supplies exist to satisfy long-term needs and, unlike solar power, economically practical technology for generating electricity exists now and does not depend on speculative developments. However, from a health and environmental viewpoint, coal is the worst choice we have.

*Malcolm J. Sherman
Albany, New York*

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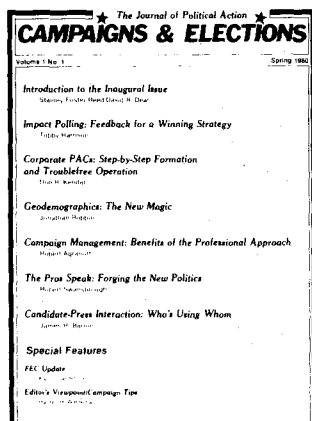
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must know the way, looking at them now,
if not to be more easy in your life
than I, then braver. We are married now,
and teaching me will take a life.

Jason Sommer

Martin contends that the imposition of civil liberties would deprive workers of the more valuable right to higher wages. He argues that the current ban on employee rights in American workplaces does not result from a legal system forced on workers through the economic power of employers. Instead, he says, it stems from "mutually agreeable arrangements" in which employees have asked management to protect them from other employees' "goldbricking."

"Workers use the firm as a monitoring agent," he says, "implicitly authorizing it to direct work, manage tools, observe work practices and other on-the-job activities, and discipline transgressors. The reduction in personal liberty that workers sustain in a firm has a smaller value for them, at the margin, than the increase in earning power that results."

A second group of writers believes that corporate leaders, when aware of employee discontent, will take voluntary steps to reduce their power, but that they should control that process in order to protect productivity. This group includes top officers of such corporations as IBM and Bank of America, who describe their efforts to give workers more access to their own personnel records and to written company policies on other matters.

The third group argues that employee rights can be expanded only through legislation and court decisions. Enforcement of these new legal rights would be the responsibility of the courts or, in some cases, of government-sponsored arbitrators.

The fourth viewpoint is that collective

action is the most effective way to achieve individual rights. All the writers would concede that workers' rights are greater under union contracts, but only labor attorney and historian Staughton Lynd is given space to discuss the need to spread unionism if civil liberties are to be spread as well. The book contains no summary of existing collective bargaining language guaranteeing constitutional rights, no speculation on new language unions could push for, no discussion of alternatives found by unions to lengthy arbitration or court procedures in workers' rights cases, and no survey of attempts by unorganized workers to win union protection because of civil liberties concerns. In 436 pages of text, only one and a half pages are devoted to comment by a union leader, and even that is just on one narrow issue.

In the introduction the editors point out that the demand today for protection of employee rights "is not voiced in an anti-management or class warfare framework." It may not be in their book, but it surely is in American workplaces, where battles for civil liberties usually are power struggles, pure and simple. In a reader such as this, more of these struggles should be described in detail for discussion purposes. The editors should have included articles on the highly charged legislative fight (Lane Kirkland called it "class warfare") over labor law reform, designed to protect workers' right to join and organize unions. They could have juxtaposed statements of the right-wing owners of Adolph Coors Co. with those of workers who struck for a year in part because the

company made them take lie detector tests about their sex lives and religious and political beliefs. They could have solicited views from both sides at the Sanderson Farms chicken processing plant in Laurel, Mississippi, where an issue in another year-long strike is whether employees should be able to use the bathroom more than three times per week outside two regularly scheduled 10-minute breaks each day.

With the help of case studies like these, readers could better evaluate Lynd's conclusion that individual rights cannot be guaranteed "without changing the fundamental allocation of power between management and labor" because, by the logic of the corporate leaders' own expressed point of view, "decency must give way when it conflicts with profit."

Matt Witt

Matt Witt is an editor of *American Labor* and director of the American Labor Education Center.

Brief Review

A Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy Toole

(Louisiana State University Press;
\$12.95)

To the list of distinguished novels discovered and published after their authors' deaths we may add *A Confederacy of Dunces*. The failure of American publishers to bring out this book during John Kennedy Toole's abbreviated lifetime illustrates the aptness of its title. It comes from Swift: "When a true genius appears in the world, you shall know him by his sign, that all the dunces are in confederacy against him."

Luckily, Walker Percy and the Louisiana State University Press have rescued Mr. Toole's novel from oblivion. Percy, while teaching at Loyola University in New Orleans in 1976, was subject to the impassioned pleas of aspiring writers. One day Mr. Toole's mother called Percy and told him her son, who had died in 1963, had written a "great novel" which Mr. Percy must read. Dreading the prospect, Percy finally consented to glance through the opening pages of the first chapter, hoping to put it aside as yet another worthless manuscript. But wait. The first chapter

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My ad reads:



THE NEW REPUBLIC MAGAZINE

At just about the time the Irish came to America in search of food and the Germans in search of freedom, waves of earlier immigrants and their descendants trekked west to California in search of gold. Some found it. Ever since, California has been the place where sudden and spectacular fortunes have been made in oil, in real estate, in the movies, in cattle, and recently in wine. Brains count too: there are fortunes built on silicon chips and semiconductors. I suspect that California is what we mean when we talk of America as a fabulous country, fabulous as in fabled, fabled as in Croesus. Not everybody came here hoping to strike it rich, certainly not the thousands of Chinese who were brought to build Leland Stanford's railroad. But now their great-grandchildren, along with the many Japanese-Americans here, have proved that the meritocratic promise actually does work and, in the process, vanquishes ugly bigotries. The steadiest new arrivals in recent years have been Mexicans. They are different in that they come in greater numbers, and the country they come from is so close. Those two facts mean a permanent bilingual society. How ironic it is that California, which has provided most of the "visuals" for the monoculture, should be the first state where that monoculture finally breaks down.

The editor-in-chief leaves on vacation and there appears in the first editorial while he's gone ("The Fruits of Election Reform," *TNR*, June 28) some mischievous nonsense he'd never tolerate. I mean that crack about how if, in 1984, God is "really looking after the USA, he surely will save us from Jerry Brown." Who knows whom I'll support in November of Orwell's deadline year; maybe I'll be voting for John Anderson for a second term. But let me put the record straight. In the choice Democrats had this year, I preferred, and voted in the Massachusetts primary for, Jerry Brown. Jimmy Carter's politics are not my politics, either on domestic or on foreign matters. Of course, his politics change from day to day, from poll to poll, from economic indicator to economic indicator. But that doesn't make his politics better. Ted Kennedy's particular politics are irrelevant. No politician in the country would fracture the body politic more than he—not even, heaven forbid, President Reagan. It's not something to wish for. So here in

California, I remind myself that once again I was for the marginal candidate, the one who took the long view, came at issues from odd perspectives, and didn't shout. Brown doesn't believe that California is necessarily the rest of America's future; but in conversation about California with him over the years, I've learned a lot about America. Brown suggested a while back, on the basis of his experience in California, that there soon would be great tensions between our black and Hispanic minorities, that the Hispanics would do better than the blacks, and that the black leadership, so free with the rhetoric of demand and so averse to the disciplines of self-criticism and self-improvement, are not free of blame if their constituency languishes in despair. There is—it is evident to everybody in the professional classes—a growing black middle class. But for the mass of urban blacks, languishing in despair is precisely what I think they do.

On the evidence of a tourist's visit to California, blacks are neither much in the common economy nor in the common leisure culture. I'm always jarred by the absence of blacks at the Kennedy Center, but my own visits there are for highbrow and high-ticket culture. But blacks are also not in lowbrow and moderate-ticket Disneyland, where six or seven million visit each year; not at the Universal Studios tour, which almost certainly nets more for MCA year after year than its biggest pictures; not at the Farmers' Market, a rambling multiethnic, down-scale eatery, virtually the only place in Los Angeles where the classes meet; not at a county fair in Del Mar, north of San Diego, where blacks comprise nearly 10 percent of the population. But Hispanics are visible everywhere, even at the Huntington Library in Pasadena, with its Gutenbergs and first-folio Shakespeares, its Gainsboroughs and Della Robbias. The Hispanics—even many of those whose large families speak only that agitated Mexican Spanish—have arrived. Now, in fact, there are whole sectors of the economy that speak Spanish, a language blacks don't know, and which thus has become another barrier to their advance.

The airline price war means that these days an East Coast tourist can get to California for as little as \$88. This is \$12 less than it costs me to fly coach from

Boston to DC. The big airfare discounts, along with the depressed value of the dollar, have enticed thousands of Europeans to become tourists in America. One Brit I met in the lobby of San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel told me, "The US is not quite what Spain was 10 years ago, but. . . ." I took the sparkling new BART up to Berkeley, where time has stood still. "Visit the 1960s," its Chamber of Commerce might advertise. The revolution still is happening on Telegraph Avenue, if posters can be trusted. But the right wing—the right to life, the right not to be taxed, the right to serve God's Korean vicar—also has its adherents at the campus gates where the battle of Berkeley started when you and I were young. There is also a depressingly ample representation of the bean sprouts and hash generation. Times have changed, and memory fades. At Disneyland, one of the rides we took was on a simulated jungle river. The boat I scampered into was named Mekong Maiden. Everyone on board was smiling, including some Vietnamese.

Morticians advertise their services in Los Angeles on benches along the busy streets. I've never quite allowed myself to sit down on one of Groman's benches or Willand's, fearing I might be carted off to where LA's toney Jews are embalmed. I have fewer anxieties about resting on a Gentile mortician's bench, but there are fewer of these, at least in the parts of town I frequent. Many of my friends live in Beverly Hills, where you can't get a modest house for half a million dollars and one million dollars won't buy you an opulent one. Most of the folks I know here moved in before such sums were the price of entry. But Beverly Hills has long been a neighborhood for the rich. There's hardly a house without two or three cars in its driveway, the most understated of which is a BMW or Audi. Unlike the affluent elsewhere, those in Beverly Hills don't seem to aspire to privacy or even the illusion of it. The typical \$1.5 million house(!) faces directly onto the street, with a relatively narrow set-back, and is not more than a long arm's stretch to its abutters, left and right. These are the homes of uprooted people, clustering together for security and recognition, bungalow colony style. The local inn is called, in fact, the Beverly Hills Hotel and Bungalow Colony.

M.P.

Every Saturday, I reach eagerly for the *Rand Daily Mail* to learn which publications the regime's censors have banned in the preceding week. Has Kim Il Sung made it again? Yes! The prolific North Korean leader's latest booklet (*On the Non-Aligned Movement*) is there, cheek by jowl with *Cave Man's Sex*, an obscure Trotskyist manifesto from Brazil, and a couple of garage calendars. Turning the page I permit myself more mirth by reading the accounts of debate in the all-white Parliament. Prime Minister P. W. Botha has said he wants to "improve" the Immorality Act, which outlaws sexual contact between the races. A member of the opposition Progressive Federal party has taken him up: Improve? Allow it in some cities? On certain days of the week? With a special permit? Finally, in the news section there is a real jaw-dropper. A white police constable, H. du Toit, has told a court he did not intervene when he saw a white man beating a black man because he "didn't want to get involved." He allowed, however, that he felt "a bit guilty" about his inaction because he was in a government car at the time. The black man, Mojakwena James Oliphant, died two days later from his injuries.

At times, you can get the impression this country is an immense, austral Dogpatch, run by a capricious bunch of Lester Maddoxes speaking Afrikaans. A glance at the annual *Survey*, put out by the doughty liberals at the Institute of Race Relations, is more than enough to bring painful enlightenment. The forced resettlement program, which already has dumped two million people into the impoverished bantustans, continues unabated. This policy of deliberate dislocation and poverty has contributed to an astronomical crime rate: in 1976-77, there were two and one-half times as many murders here as in the United States, which has eight times the population. In 1978 some 132 people, all but one of them black, were hanged. Apartheid is not an idiosyncratic, whimsical kind of segregation, but a carefully planned policy of political domination and economic exploitation. The regime still has its crude clowns, but the men responsible for this policy are increasingly smooth talkers who politely say "blacks" instead of the discredited "Bantu" or "natives" and talk of "vertical differentiation" or even "good neighborliness" in place of "apartheid." Their approach to politics is un-

believably cynical. A journalist friend of mine asked a minister why several whites were included in the October 1977 crackdown following the murder of Steve Biko. "They were not really dangerous to you," my friend said. "You could point to them as evidence that the government permits criticism." "Yes," the minister replied, "but we had a problem. We had to detain and ban all these blacks, but we didn't want people to say we were racist. So we threw in a few whites as well."

How can this regime be toppled? Professor Michael Walzer would find South Africa an interesting case study for his inquiry into the justification for political violence. The African National Congress, founded in 1912, first tried petition efforts followed by nonviolent civil disobedience campaigns. Apartheid only grew more harsh. In the early 1960s, the ANC turned to sabotage. That effort also failed, and Nelson Mandela and other ANC leaders still are serving life sentences on Robben Island, the fortress off Cape Town. Only then did the ANC turn reluctantly to guerrilla warfare. In early June, the organization staged its most spectacular attack thus far, bombing the vital Sasol oil-from-coal plant south of here and inflicting \$7.5 million in damage.

I recently asked a friend of mine who is an ANC commander in a neighboring country if he'd mind if most of the whites left this country, even though the organization's membership is multi-racial and its Freedom Charter specifies that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white." He became excited. "Maybe it's my Christian upbringing, but I can't agree to that. Do you realize that the ancestors of some of those white people came 300 years ago? They have as much right to live there as we do!" I blinked, thinking for a moment I was listening to John Vorster or one of the troglodyte ministers in the Dutch Reformed church. My friend carries a revolver to protect himself against the secret police, who are among the people whose right to remain in South Africa he so vehemently champions. In an oft-quoted line from *Cry, the Beloved Country* (written in 1948), a black preacher says, "I have one great fear in my heart, that one day when they are turning to loving, they will find we are turned to hating." My friend is turned to fighting, but not to hating.

The ANC is supported by the Soviet Union, and works in a close alliance with the outlawed Communist party. What are we to make of this? President Kaunda of Zambia points out that the West joined forces with Stalin to defeat fascism, and that southern Africans, with a similar regime to confront, are merely following the example of Churchill and Roosevelt. The ANC would welcome aid from the West (and in fact gets some from Scandinavia). Its Freedom Charter basically is a nationalist program with democratic socialist features, hardly inimical to the West (although potentially threatening to certain business interests). It may be expecting too much to hope that America will help the ANC to shorten this bloody process, though our government seems to be assisting Afghani nomads whose political principles would seem to have less in common with our own. What can America do, short of shipping M-16 rifles down here?

Impose sanctions, for one thing. The exiled journalist Donald Woods has compared pro-investment arguments with advocating economic involvement in Nazi Germany in the 1930s because it provided Jews with jobs. His analogy grows increasingly realistic. The regime either has or will have nuclear weapons, and I wouldn't want to live in Salisbury or Maputo as the conflict intensifies. Total sanctions, backed if possible by an international blockade, is the only measure short of war that will bring the white government to the bargaining table, promptly and in earnest. Blacks do not like to be reminded that they will suffer most in the coming war: they realize it, and increasing numbers of them have decided to press ahead anyway. But they would of course prefer a peaceful settlement. The novelist Nadine Gordimer has called this beautiful country "a land where there are still heroes." A truly astonishing number of people here, both black and white, have been harassed, banned, arrested, imprisoned, and murdered for trying to change this wicked system. If Western governments would only show an infinitesimal amount of the same courage, the coming bloodbath could be averted.

James North

James North is a pseudonym for an American living in southern Africa.

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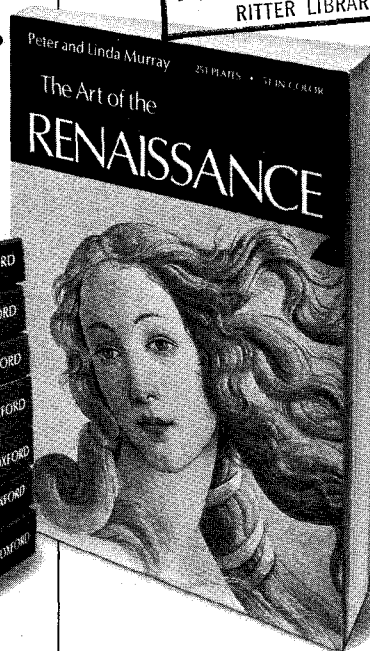
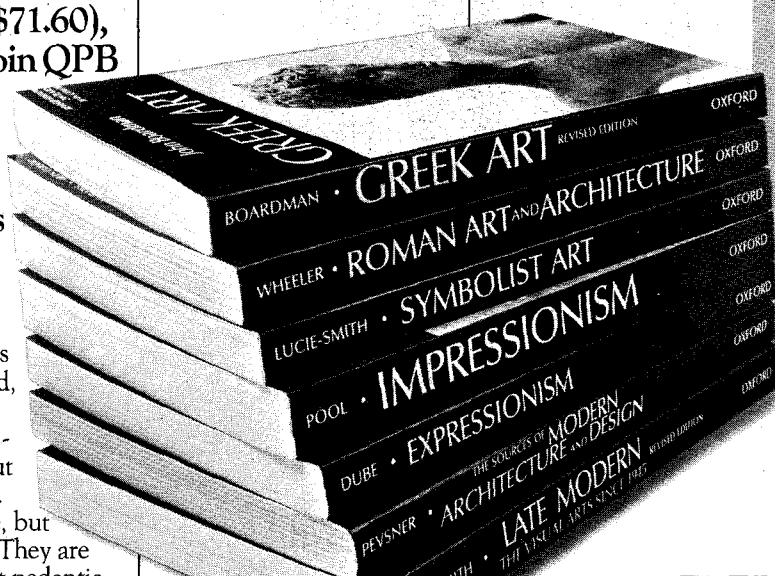
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